

# NEW

JULY 6, 1937

# MASS

FIFTEEN CENTS A CO

## How the Steel Union Fight Girdler's Gang

*Benjamin Kay*

## Has Birth Control Arrived?

*Margaret Sanger*

## Democracy and the Irish Elections

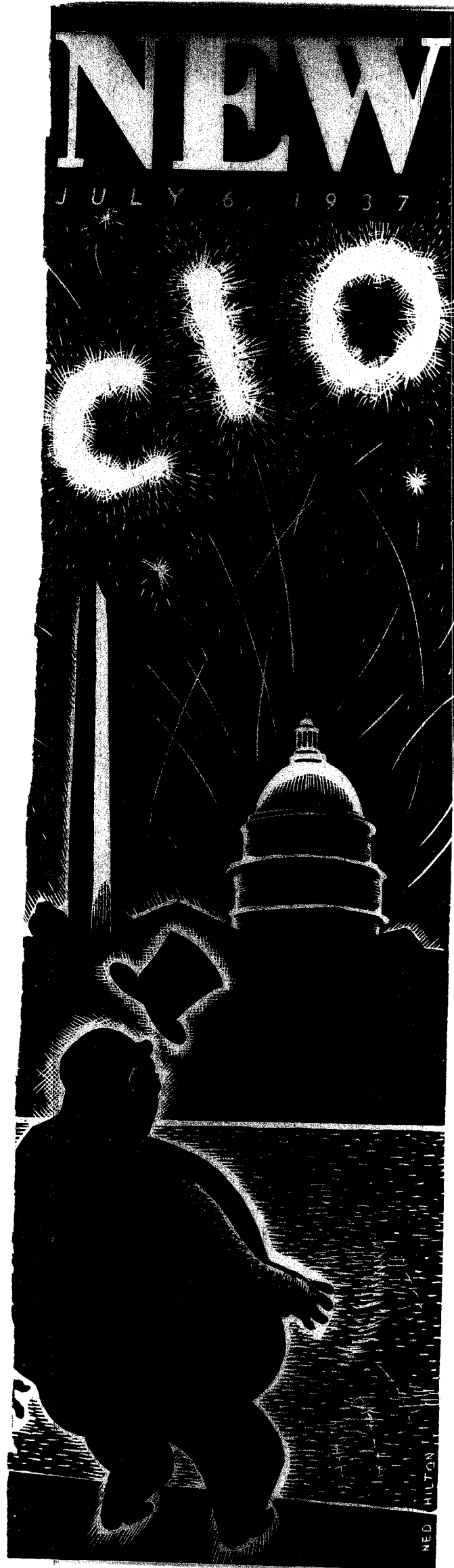
*Brian O'Neill*

## The Basque Children in Britain

*Naomi Mitchison*

## Modern Writers and Social Themes

*Josephine Johnson    Millen Brand*



# Independence

**Y**OU are one of the millions of Americans who this week are celebrating Independence Day, the birthday of the first American revolution. With you the NEW MASSES hails again the days when the colonial troops, fighting for freedom and progress with the aid of Lafayette's international brigades, broke the stranglehold of the British landowners and mercantilists.

And if you know your history, you know that before and during the revolution, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and others had ceaselessly, in pamphlets and periodicals, explained the issues of the day to the colonists. These papers were teachers and organizers. *What would it have meant to America if they had not been able to appear?*

The NEW MASSES today is carrying on the tradition of those journals of the first American revolution. Listen to this letter: "The Ben Leider Memorial Fund, which was created to perpetuate the memory of Ben Leider, who died fighting for democracy in Spain, has watched with interest the reports on the Spanish situation which have appeared from time to time in the NEW MASSES. We have been impressed with the veracity and accuracy of these reports and feel keenly the importance and necessity for their continuance. The magazine has urgently

# Day



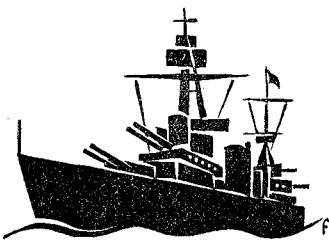
expressed a need for funds and we urgently require the need for truth about Spain. Enclosed you will find a check for \$100."

Do you think this magazine is worth saving? We know that you, a NEW MASSES reader, like plain talk. And so we're saying it bluntly: our financial drive has fallen far short of our expectations and our *needs*. We asked ten thousand dollars, based on a bare minimum budget that requires the reduced staff even to sweep and clean its own offices. We have received only four thousand dollars. It is not enough to assure our continued publication—*not nearly enough*. And it isn't because those who have given haven't been generous; they have. It's because *so many of you haven't given at all!*

And so the grim fact is that this Independence Day, in a world situation where the twin menaces of war and fascism call for a hard-hitting journal to teach and organize the American masses for freedom and progress, the NEW MASSES has to face the possibility of going under. In the name of our great American revolutionary traditions, don't let it happen!

*The Editors*

YOU'LL recall that last week we broke off in the midst of a letter received from Lieutenant-Commander Geoffrey Marshall of the Spanish loyalist destroyer *Alcala Galiano*—a letter



sent us following our acknowledgment note the loyalist bluejackets had via us to Joan Crawford. We were off at the point where Lieutenant-Commander Marshall was telling how Pedro was singing at his post, right watch next his gun—singing an undertone of pain because his brother and sister had been killed. The lieutenant-commander goes on: "When we were changed I saw Pedro standing gazing up at his gun arm, so I said, 'Go and sleep if you can, Pedro.' Looking to the sea said in a whisper, 'That gun is my mother. It will roar out the power of my mother to the fascist animals. And that dainty anti-aero is my sister and it will fight as a determined woman can fight.' Sometimes people ask us how we in discipline and vigilance!" just let me give you one more. There is the gun-controller, a, a seaman gunner. Where on he get his technical knowledge—gun circuits, of powder temperatures, of deflection, inclination, speed of enemy, etc., etc.! Well, in the old days he used to sneak down to the artillery officer's cabin when that aristocrat was ashore, and borrow text books. In 1934 a cruiser which Jose Roka was in was ordered to shell the Marian miners. Roka and the rest crew quietly waited until only ten miles away from then threw the breech- overboard. So Roka ex- complete technical knowl- two and a half years he .. He has been chief gunner p since July 1936, and has a lot of fascists. And he has too. He is the local leading the Prevention of Cruelty to Society and finds bull-fighting id degrading. course you will find a buddy on ship somewhere. There are 170 on this ship. I have 170 buddies. kes a little time to dawn on you every single man jack and boy in ship is just a little more interesting, ore generous and instinctively courte- is, more humorous and intelligent man the others. It is a little unreal to on, month after month, in crowded sters, in fine weather and bad, with- ever hearing a suggestion of sar- m or unkindness. It kind of makes or heart feel as if it is a toy balloon rift from its moorings. "Why doesn't the chief engineer eat in the dining room at sea? He is sit- ting on the skylights which cover his precious 40,000 h.p. turbines and holds classes in engineering. It is a bit strange. From the attitude of the boys a child could see that they treat him with more affection than respect. And imagine signalmen making and taking

## BETWEEN OURSELVES

signals and reporting to the officer of the watch without salaaming Allah! But we get along. We get along. Personally I came to Spain because I was afraid of fascism so want to help to bury it. But now that I am living and working with a crowd who have shamed me into at least trying to be tolerant and generous and valiant, the temperature of my hatred for fascism is 100 times greater. People like these have just got to live, just got to have freedom. Fascism is worse than terrible anywhere—but the thought that the Black Plague might strike down these happy, generous, intelligent children drives me into a cold sweat. But no! I am wrong. The Black Plague will never take one of these boys alive. Reminds me of the motto of this ship. 'If they tell you my ship is captured—say that I am dead.'"

### Who's Who

**BENJAMIN KAY** is a labor journal- ist who has traveled extensively through the steel area. He makes his

NEW MASSES debut in this issue. . . . Margaret Sanger, long a pioneer for the necessity of making birth-control information available to all women, established the first birth control clinic in this country. . . . Brian O'Neill is the author of *Easter Week*, a story of the Irish Rebellion of 1916. . . . Millen Brand's *The Outward Room* is head- ing the best-seller lists. . . . Josephine Johnson won the Pulitzer prize for *Now in November*, which she followed with *Jordanstown*. . . . Naomi Mitchi- son's most recent work is *We Have Been Warned*. She has frequently con- tributed to the NEW MASSES. . . . Helen Chen translated the letter from Man- churia by "Ming." . . . Selden Rodman is an editor of *Common Sense* and author of *Lawrence: The Last Cru- sade*. . . . Max Hutt is president of the Psychologists' League and a mem- ber of the staff of the Educational Clinic at the College of the City of New York. . . . Leo Gurko's book re- views have frequently appeared in *Living Age* and the NEW MASSES. . . . The two prints on page 15 are from a

twenty-print series issued by the Chicago Artists' Congress for the ben- efit of Spanish democracy. . . . Harind- ranath Chattopadhyaya is a young Hindu poet and dramatist.

### What's What

**L**AST week we wrote to a couple of dozen American magazines, telling them that the American boys in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion were hungry for reading matter, and sug- gesting that they follow our example and send over a certain number of copies of each issue. The first reply was from Monte Bourjaily, editor and publisher of *Judge*, who said he'd be glad to, and was sending a batch of back numbers as well. We're sure the boys will be glad to get your paper, Mr. Bourjaily. Now how about you other publishers? How about it, for ex- ample, Editor Ross of the *New Yorker*? Will Eustace Tilley unbend to the point of sending a hundred copies a week to the boys fighting for world democracy?

Important notice: New York readers have the opportunity of attending a mass reception for the Soviet polar fliers Thursday night, July 1, at the 71st Regiment Armory, 34th Street and Park Avenue. *Soviet Russia Today*, which is sponsoring the meeting, an- nounces the following speakers: Sena- tors William G. McAdoo, Joseph P. Guffey, and Robert J. Bulkley; Am- bassador Alexander Troyanovsky, Ex- plorer Vilhjalmur Stefansson, and others.

Michael Williams, editor of the Catholic *Commonweal*, will debate Le- land Stowe over Station WNEW, New York, July 7 at 8 p.m., on the merits of the Spanish loyalist cause.

Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Bat- talion and of the NEW MASSES are invited to a swell affair the night of Friday, July 23. The advertisement on page 24 gives the details.

### Flashbacks

**A**CERTAIN man named Girdler somehow reminds us that on the first of July every year American steel workers commemorate the massacre at Homestead, Pa. In 1892 the Carnegie Steel Co. brought in the Pinkerton secret service agency to do the first really big strike-breaking job in his- tory. A half-dozen men dropped on each side of an armed battle, and, after five days' captivity in the steel mill, the Pinkertons were driven out of town. . . . As American workers prepare to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Mother Bloor on July 8, they may note with pride that the revolutionary movement has a way of attracting the most vigorous women to it. Clara Zetkin, who lived to be seventy-six, and a Communist member of the Reichstag, was born July 6, 1857. . . . And lest we forget, July 4, 1776 has attained some fame as the day on which certain Americans said, "Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends [life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness] it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it and to institute a new gov- ernment, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happi- ness."

## THIS WEEK

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William Sanderson

## Fighting Girdler's Gang

*Three aspects of the struggle in Youngstown show the union's strength in the touch-and-go of class warfare*

By Benjamin Kay

**Y**OUNGSTOWN, O., has been as white-hot as the steel it rolls for some time now, and there have been some very interesting situations which have been lost sight of in the course of the plentiful coverage of the main clash between the C.I.O. and Girdler and his gorillas. Three items are of special interest.

### *Making the News Fit to Print*

NEWS IN YOUNGSTOWN is exclusively purveyed by one sheet, the *Vindicator*. Its owners recently purchased their only competitor, the Scripps-Howard Youngstown *Telegram*, combined the sheets, and thereby obtained a clear field. They assumed their monopoly licensed them to lie. And Mahoning Valley's quarter of a million citizens were served daily portions of fascist fiction in the guise of news.

Naturally, during the course of the present steel strike, the *Vindicator* played a role of opposition to everything decent. It portrayed the strikers as riotous marauders, and stooped to direct misquotation continually. Attempting to stir up the local citizenry to violence against the pickets, the "*Vindi*" utilized every cliché in the Red-baiting repertoire. You know the sort of stories . . . from the old school of "Moscow gold" to the new school of "Menacing Minorities Molest Mill Men," or words to that effect. The C.I.O. became the ugly dictatorial threat in America.

And then the workers took a hand. On Sunday, June 6, the Republic lodge of the

steel union voted to boycott the *Vindicator* for its lying reportage and vicious editorials. On Monday the union strategy committee visited leading *Vindicator* advertisers and informed them of the boycott. These merchants, normally opposed to the strike, saw that their sales might be cut. Pocketbooks won over "principle," so pressure came from two directions. By Tuesday the boycott had taken on serious proportions. Circulation fell. By Thursday newsboys were carrying light loads in most sections of the city. The publishers began to squirm.

The morning of Sunday, June 13, found the pickets tense. Well-founded rumors said that Republic had massed sufficient cohorts to attempt to break the strike by force, and that the fight would begin Sunday night. Mass meetings were in preparation all over the valley, several in Youngstown proper, and big ones in Campbell, Struthers, Niles, and Warren. An ugly situation appeared inevitable. Leaders conferred; men, women, and children appeared on the streets early; and company thugs were evident everywhere. Republic obviously was prepared to stop nowhere short of mass murder. Even the sky was threatening, when lo and behold, appeared the sacrosanct Youngstown Sunday *Vindicator* with a *pro-strike* editorial right on page one. Reaction had reacted. A large and powerful newspaper, for years the mouthpiece of the mill moguls, had made an about-face.

In one week the organized and conscientiously carried out boycott had been so effective

that it brought about this truly amazing turn. Without equivocation the *Vindicator* stated that if they wanted to continue to enjoy the good faith of the people of Mahoning Valley, the companies were obligated to sign *written* contracts with their workers.

There was jubilation on the picket lines. Republic didn't dare try to rush the gates that night. Thousands of Mahoning Valley citizens who had been neutral became *pro-strike*. Tens of thousands who had been opposed to the demands of the C.I.O. decided that the "*Vindi*" was right on that point. On the other side Youngstown, anti-strike in sentiment, to say, "Well, strikes are bad, and want too much, but it must be admitted if the company is going to bargain at all should do it in a businesslike fashion and a written agreement." Republic held its breath. Youngstown Sheet & Tube tried no trick. Youngstown isn't forgetting that lesson.

### *The Negro Question*

OF COURSE the steel barons haven't lagged too far behind in developing new strategic approaches. An example of the methods employed to spread dissension in the strikers' ranks may be found in the manner in which the companies tried to create a serious cleavage between the white and Negro workers.

In 1919, and for a few years after that, thousands of Negroes were brought to Youngstown in railroad box-cars. Many were utilized as strike-breakers. For this the Negroes can-

be blamed. They were lured from the cotton fields by promises of fabulous wages. But it was a kind of slave-trading. Little did they realize what their lot would be. And when they found themselves day laborers doing outrageously hard work for long hours and low pay, their resentment grew mightily. At the same time the steel operators spread propaganda among the white workers to the effect that the Negroes had scabbed once and would probably do it again. It was also pointed out that the Negro workers always accepted lower wages and therefore offered a threat even when the mills were operating.

When the strike call came five weeks ago, the operators saw an opportunity to split the ranks of Negro and white workers. They were disappointed when the Negroes turned out almost 100 percent for the union. Only fifteen scabbed. But the company was unflinching, and by machiavellian methods almost precipitated a serious race riot on the picket lines. Well-trained provocateurs incited many of the less advanced elements in the union to attack the Negroes. As a result, many Negroes stayed away from the picket lines after the first few days. Not realizing that company agents masquerading as union men had provoked these incidents, feeling began to run high in the local Negro community against the supposed union policies. Recruiting prominent "Uncle Tom" Negro members of the locality to carry their message, the company succeeded in aligning a considerable number of Negro workers to their policy. Negroes were told that they had nothing to gain from the union even should it win the strike. Since wages would not rise more than 10 or 15 percent, day laborers would still make "small money." The bait was held out that if the Negro workers would return to the mill they would be given the skilled jobs, which paid two and three times the common-labor wage. And the corporations would keep these "loyal" workers in their new categories, not replacing them, after the strike, with white men. The fraud here was not apparent. But manifestly the union could not obtain for any length of time, since skilled steel workers are the product of years of training and are at a premium. Negro workers have never been given the least opportunity to achieve that skill. Members of Negro workers reasoned that they had everything to gain by going to work, and the risks of trouble by staying out." The gamble seemed worth it, and it was rumored that an attempt would be made to organize a "flying wedge" of two thousand Negroes who would attempt to break the picket line. Back-to-work petitions were signed by hundreds of these men.

But the steelmasters had not reckoned with the tremendous speed with which the C.I.O. leaders meet situations. Flying squadrons were organized at once to visit and bring all Negro workers to mass meetings where it was pointed out that the place of the Negro was secure in the C.I.O. because only there would he receive adequate protection against color discrimination. He was told, probably for the

first time, that these thousands of white men needed him, needed him desperately, and would repay his support with a new level of relations. Instances were pointed to of leading positions in the C.I.O. being held by Negroes. Reasons were given for the difference between the C.I.O. policy towards the Negro question and that of many old guard A.F. of L. unions which openly practiced jim-crowism as part of a narrow craft ideology. The union tactics had an immediate effect, and an ugly situation was smoothed out.

### Local Boy Makes Good

IN THE MEANTIME the Girdler gang was seriously concerned with another problem. A problem a little over twenty years old. That problem was Robert Burke. Bob Burke, as you recall, was the American Student Union leader who was dismissed from Columbia University last year for leading a demonstration in front of Nicholas Murray Butler's home in protest against Columbia's participation in the Nazi's Heidelberg University fete.

Now, Bob is your ideal American boy. Tall, lean, and handsome, with an open countenance that readily gains the respect and confidence of any group, Bob presents an enviable record. He was president of the Junior Class at Columbia at the time of his expulsion, and amateur boxing champ of New York state. His campus activities at Columbia are legend by now, and his popularity with the undergraduate body was so great that many students who refused to ally themselves with the progressive bloc at Columbia eagerly participated in the student strike called to protest his dismissal. And in Youngstown. . . .

Well, Bob Burke is the local boy who made good. Always a popular leader, known in his Rayen High School days as a proud exemplification of all that is most desirable in American youth, he was born in Youngstown, and his family was widely known and highly respected, certainly not newcomers to the region. Before the strike Bob was in the employ of Republic Steel. Fired for union activity, Bob continued his organizational work and oc-

cupied a leading position with the C.I.O. As an organizer his work has been brilliant. It is no exaggeration to state that Bob is idolized by fifty thousand Youngstowners. With the daughters of the local mill workers Bob has supplanted Robert Taylor. Your reporter talked to at least five girls who were collecting pictures of him and sending him mash notes.

Naturally, Bob is anathema to the moguls. They have not failed to stoop to campaigns of personal calumny against him and to vicious attacks upon his character, because the usual claptrap about "outside agitator," "foreigner," and "non-Aryan" was worthless.

And so the *Vindicator* printed pictures of him with a cigar in his mouth and wearing a derby hat, needing a shave and looking like a man who was shaking off a three-day drunk. This didn't discredit him sufficiently; some fans thought it showed a many-sided nature. As a matter of fact the picture was taken when Bob was worn out after three sleepless nights on the picket line. Next came flagrant misquotation. Violent statements were attributed to him, and he was charged with having said that the union, too, had guns and would use them. This was a plain lie. And it didn't work.

Realizing that his tremendous influence was a major factor in the strike's effectiveness, the big boys tried to get him. Too shrewd to do it crudely by beating him up or killing him, they decided to frame him.

Market Street Bridge leads directly to Youngstown's public square. The bridge is a viaduct over the Mahoning River, mill properties, and railroad tracks, leading to the south side of the town. A ramp leading off the bridge connects with one of the upper stories of the office building of Republic Steel. The lower stories are below the bridge, since the building's foundation is on the land beside the river. The upper stories rise higher than the bridge. It's important to visualize this scene.

About midnight of June 9, a Wednesday, approximately thirty union pickets, led by Burke, were quietly encamped outside the gate to the plant entrance here. (The plant stretches along the river behind the office building for several miles.) Things were quiet, and the men, according to Bob, were playing cards and singing. Just as it looked like a nice quiet evening, and as Bob was preparing to leave to inspect another picket line, the local constabulary arrived in full war-time regalia, accompanying a food truck. When it was seen that they would attempt to rush the truck through to the mill, a hurry call went out for picket support, and in no time it began to arrive on foot and in cars. About five hundred men had gathered when the attack started. At the moment the excitement was at such a pitch that no one stopped to realize that it was not natural for police to hold up a major charge until the strikers had gained numerical strength. And then the fun began.

Out of the crowd of union men came two lusty voices, shouting in unison, "There's Nig



A. Tobias



"Tell the gentlemen of the press how perfectly satisfied all you loyal workers are."

Ned Hilton

Ross." Immediately the cry was taken up by others, because Nig Ross is considered Public Rat and Stool-Pigeon No. 1 by Republic men, and the natural urge was to "get him." And there was Ross, big as life, standing nonchalantly on the bridge at the top of the ramp. To Bob Burke's highly developed sensibilities it appeared "a little screwy to see Ross standing alone and apparently unafraid within fifty yards of hundreds of militant union men." So Bob placed himself squarely on the bottom of the ramp, on the fourth step to be exact (between Ross and the strikers), and shouted for order and discipline. Several times he called to the men to obey only his orders and to let nobody provoke them to any trouble. As Bob stated to your reporter later, "I didn't see any point in risking the lives of any of my men in order to stop *one* food truck, and I didn't want any trouble with Ross at this point, so I shouted to him to leave." Scores, in fact, heard Burke shout to Ross, "Nig Ross, you rat, get the hell away from here; there'll be trouble!"

But Ross stood his ground. At this point a few men from the strikers' ranks started to charge the cops, against Burke's specific orders. Undoubtedly they were incited by provocateurs within their ranks. The timing was too studied to be accidental.

As they charged, the police swung into action, and at the height of the melee, a shot rang out.

Nig Ross fell, wounded. Not much atten-

tion was paid to this by the union men at the moment. Burke succeeded in establishing order and proceeded to dismiss the supporters or send them to other posts. The men dispersed again, leaving about thirty, under Burke's leadership, to guard the gate. Bob had apparently succeeded in quieting what looked like the beginning of an ugly situation. The police left, leaving only a few officers around.

By morning the *Vindicator* was hysterically shouting that a peaceful citizen had been shot by a murderous mob. Justice was demanded. The sheriff's office offered a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Ross's assailant. You can guess the rest of the story.

Yes, Bob Burke was arrested, upon sworn information given by "reliable pickets" who "saw Burke reach for a gun and shoot Ross." Burke didn't even reach for a Murad.

No, Bob Burke did not shoot Nig Ross. True, he called him a rat, and told him to beat it, but for reasons obviously different from any desire to shoot Ross at the moment. The shot that wounded Nig Ross came from another source. Not from the cops. Nor did it come from the strike ranks.

The shot that hit Nig Ross came from a window of the Republic Steel office building. Remember the description of the scene: the building rises above the bridge. Simple matter. It is even possible that the cops were not aware of the clever frame-up. They were,

it is believed, merely carrying out company orders to be there and thus and so. Burke is now under \$1500 bail, charged with "shooting with intent to kill."

Will Bob Burke become another Tor Mooney? Bob says, emphatically, no. "As long as the people of Mahoning Valley continue to support our struggle," he told me "realizing that the issue here is of more than immediate importance, realizing that we are at grips with finance-capital fascism, American plan, these decent people will insist that no union man is railroaded." The morning towards one of the union cars, rushing to his fifth mass meeting of the day, offered sagacious advice. "Keep your pants you know what happened to the scabs, filches, and nobles in Warren when they didn't! And tell the NEW MASSES readers that we'll keep our pants on, and our shirts too. Because we'll win this strike. They can't beat the American working man any longer. Law-and-order leagues of mere hundreds will learn not to try to terrorize union groups of thousands."

So we'll keep our pants on. In the Warren plant of the Republic *everyone* inside the plant is infested with a horde of Masaryk Maulers, sometimes called crabs. It seems that vermin attract vermin. Report is that the six members of the demi-monde who were imported to the plant along with extra ammunition caused the plague. As Bob Burke succinctly analyzed the situation: "They're not producing steel, they're too busy scratching."

# Democracy and the Irish Elections

*The outcome of the struggle between De Valera and Cosgrave may clear the way for real progressivism*

By Brian O'Neill

**D**UBLIN.—A changed Irish people will go to the polls in the Free State general election on July 1. The basic attending forces remain the same as in 1932; the circumstances are totally different.

In 1932 the Irish people drove the Cosgrave government from office and swept Eamon de Valera and his Fianna Fáil party (the "Army of Destiny") to power. Cosgrave was smashed by a wave of popular anger against his subservience to British imperialism, against his terror methods, against his reactionary social policy. The masses sought to end their poverty-stricken conditions, to open the jail gates and free Republican prisoners, to restore democratic rights, to strike a blow at imperialism.

The Left was united. Fianna Fáil and the Labor Party combined. Even the Irish Republican Army, with reservations, threw its weight behind De Valera.

De Valera came to power in a Free State as full of illusions as America after Roosevelt's first victory. The new government released the prisoners, and they were welcomed by bonfires and cheering crowds. Madame Maud Gonne MacBride, veteran Republican, even suggested that certain bastilles be closed; they would be needed no more. De Valera topped paying land annuities and other tribute to Britain, the imperial government retaliated by placing penal tariff duties on imports of Irish livestock, and the Anglo-Irish dispute flared up again. De Valera drafted a plan for the industrialization of the country, and announced his readiness to "go outside the system" if unemployment and poverty cannot be

WORLD has changed since 1932. Ireland has not been able to remain aloof from the economic crisis and recovery, the rise of fascism, and the drive to war. The economic crisis, frightened by Britain's punitive measures, reduced Irish agriculture to the sorest straits in the first two years of De Valera. Recovery has raised farm prices and enabled the Free State to burst many of the barriers set up against its export trade; exports are steadily rising in quantity and value. It is this change that has enabled De Valera—to the consternation of Britain and its allies here, who forecast complete collapse—to fight an economic war and at the same time develop the industrialization of the country.

A *March of Time* number has given Americans one picture of this industrialization. How far and in what direction has it proceeded? Remember that before 1932, the Free State was among the most backward of European



*Eamon de Valera*

Gerry

countries. Almost all manufactured consumption goods were imported: clothing, shoes, flour, sugar, etc. De Valera boasts he has built 800 new factories, employing 80,000 new workers, with an additional yearly output of \$56,000,000. New capital invested in industry in 1931, the last year of Cosgrave's regime, amounted to only \$3,350,000. Last year it was \$33,633,000. There is some slight growth of heavy industry, basic industries are still absent, but many of the light consumption industries are almost producing the full demand. And it should be noted that at least 70 percent of the capital is foreign: British, Belgian, even French and Czechoslovak. Many of the biggest new firms are mere branches of English trusts with "dummy" Irish directors.

Parallel with this development, De Valera has established monopolies in all fields. A score of bus companies competed against the Dublin United Tramways Co. in the capital; De Valera wiped them out and gave the Tramways Co. the sole right to run services in the Dublin area. Long-distance buses competed against the Great Southern Railway (which had already eliminated its railroad competitors under Cosgrave); De Valera took them over, and the G.S.R. now controls all road and rail traffic in the Free State. Railroad and street-car companies are linked up in the same Murphy trust which publishes the anti-government newspaper chain, headed by the *Irish Independent*, so De Valera has given this handful of his enemies complete control over all transport services in the country.

Petty improvements have been made in social services—new houses, jobless assistance, widows' pensions, etc.—but there are still 100,000 unemployed (an enormous number in a country with such a small industrial population); 50,000 young men and girls have fled the country in the last two years, finding in English armament factories the jobs they are denied at home; and wages and working conditions are still at low levels—in the new factories they are particularly bad. Social discontent with De Valera has risen to new heights; in Dublin as I write there are 20,000 workers on strike, and other strikes taking place all over the country.

WHILE DE VALERA's social policy has disillusioned thousands of workers who had placed faith in his "Christian social policy"—those fair-seeming phrases seem to have fallen into disuse of late—the Republican movement has been alienated by his external policy and blows against the Irish Republican Army (I. R. A.). He has abolished the governor-generalship and the oath of allegiance to King George, but, though still contending that Fianna Fáil is republican, steadily refuses to break with the British empire. It is clear that his ultimate goal is the abolition of imperial symbols internally and an agreed form of "external association" with the empire.

This policy inevitably has brought him into conflict with republicanism. Proclaiming that, with the abolition of the oath of allegiance, there is no longer any need for extra-legal activity or armed bodies apart from the state forces, he has banned the I.R.A. and jailed thirty leading members. The week of June 14, detectives shot down a young I. R. A. man who, they said, was attempting to rescue a prisoner. De Valera thus goes into the July 1 election with the Left Republicans bitterly hostile to him and threatening to abstain from the polls.

In his favor, however, is the state of the reactionary Cosgrave-led United Ireland Party, the largest opposition group. Cosgrave had maintained power up to 1932 by open terror coupled with hypocritical professions that democracy was being defended. Cosgrave's party rested on the monopolies, the ranchers who depend on cattle exports, and the pro-British groups. Cosgrave's old party, Cumann na nGaedheal, performed a quick-change act after its election defeat. It merged with the Centre Party and an ex-officers' league to form Fine Gael (United Ireland Party); Cosgrave himself gave place to General Eoin O'Duffy, his former police chief,

**JULY 6.**  
 as leader; a uniformed "youth" section was formed, the Blueshirts; and the program of the fascist "corporative state" was taken over wholesale. It was the year of Hitler's triumph. The former defenders of democracy proclaimed (I quote their leading articles):

The present parliamentary system is un-Irish and detrimental to the people's interest. The Blueshirts think that all parliaments gabble too much, and they are not at all sure that the national will can be ascertained merely by counting heads. This Blueshirt organization is not a pacifist organization. It is not, therefore, pledged to confine itself to verbal methods.

"We must make life intolerable for those who will not yield to our demands," belated O'Duffy. "We are going to meet these people and knock hell out of them from this day forward."

But the march on Dublin failed. Blueshirts tore up roads and railroad lines, felled trees, terrorized towns; then the masses swung into action. Finally even armored cars and troops with bayonets—as at a demonstration in Dundalk—could not save the fascists who were going to "make life intolerable" for their opponents.

Reaction reconsidered the position. It seemed that things did not work out everywhere according to the Mussolini-Hitler formula. So O'Duffy was fired, the blue shirts were put in the wardrobe, the "corporative state" pamphlets were burned, and Cosgrave reemerged as the "constitutional" leader of a "constitutional party."

But if Reaction had burned its fingers, it had far from repented. Cosgrave's foreign policy is that of international fascism. He supported Mussolini's war on Ethiopia, he supports Franco in Spain, his press organs denounce the Franco-Soviet pact in the best Goebbels fashion. The Cosgrave party took a leading part in launching the new fascist venture, the "Irish Christian Front," formed to aid Franco and to crush communism in Ireland. (Among the organizations listed as "communistic" are the Labor Party and the I.R.A.) Cosgrave's press supported O'Duffy's recruiting for Franco's forces, and, now that these dispirited volunteers have returned in mysterious circumstances, hopes to use them as an election force. In relation to

Britain, Cosgrave remains openly pro-empire (though he is willing on occasion to experiment with "anti-British" phrases). If Cosgrave wins the July 1 election, it will be a victory for Britain's war preparations, another vital link closed in the empire defense chain.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION plays a part in the election only because Fianna Fáil are hoping it will clinch the issue for them. The document has aroused no enthusiasm, almost no comment. The masses sense that it marks little advance in the national position, they regard the religiosity of the phrasing (dictated by Maynooth) as sugar-coating, and the Left groups are at fault in failing to rouse a sufficiently strong opposition. Reactionary in its very tone, the new constitution is pregnant with grave dangers to democratic progress. Private property is proclaimed sacred, the regulations of one church, the Roman Catholic, on such questions as divorce become state laws, and there are provisions enabling future governments to restrict or abolish every recognized democratic right.

The changed position makes it difficult at this writing to foresee the election results. De Valera's industrial policy has gained support from new circles of manufacturers and from districts chosen as centers for new factories. There is likely to be a swing towards him in such constituencies. In Dublin, Cork, and

other big centers, on the other hand, the illusion of the masses, who are paying with an inflated cost of living for the industrial protection policy, may find expression in an anti-Fianna Fáil vote.

The Left forces are not strong and united enough to wrench away the thousands of electors who would turn from De Valera if they saw any alternative." (Everywhere this is the stock phrase.) The Labor Party is expected to gain a few seats, though only a weak-kneed policy since 1932 prevents it from making a considerable advance. Republicans are contesting only a few areas. One candidate, Bill Scott—a Dublin bricklayer recently invalidated home from Spain, where his record was outstanding—will carry the Communist standard in South Dublin.

The campaign policy of the Irish Communist Party has been to drive for a crushing defeat for Cosgrave (plus the rejection of the constitution) to end the situation where the pro-British, semi-fascist party is the main opposition. If this can be won, and the position of the Left strengthened in the Dáil, De Valera will lose his alibi and the Labor Party will be freed from its parliamentary subservience to the government. The ensuing enthusiasm will release the Republican and Labor masses into independent activity. The first steps will have been taken towards the emergence of a real alternative to De Valera.



SEEING AMERICA FIRST

XV—W.P.A. Pink Slip

Herb Kruckman



Jacob Burck

**"BY GEORGE, THAT'S REVOLUTION!"**

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# NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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## For Future Historians

WHEN Hitler departed from his prepared address before the Nazi Party convention at Wurzburg to mention Spain's ore as justification of the fascist invasion, he must have been thinking of the figures immediately below. The first column refers to annual production, while the column under "Germany needs" signifies annual imports.

|                     | Spain<br>Produces<br>(tons) | Germany<br>Needs<br>(tons) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Zinc .....          | 129,000                     | 127,000                    |
| Manganese .....     | 80,000                      | 225,000                    |
| Copper .....        | 381,000                     | 325,000                    |
| Iron Sulphate ..... | 1,600,000                   | 987,000                    |
| Iron Mineral .....  | 800,000                     | 8,264,000                  |

Students of the economic origins of fascism will also take note of another sign of the times—the only successful international congress held under the Nazi regime. The Ninth Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce opened last week with 1515 delegates from all over the world—except the U.S.S.R. The business men cheered Hitler, sang the Horst Wessel song, and gave the Nazi salute.

## Denny's Dope

THE anti-Soviet campaign in the American press shows no signs of abating. The new darling of the Trotskyists here is Harold Denny of the *New York Times*. A four-article series by Denny succeeded in bringing together under one dateline almost every loose rumor put in circulation by the lie factories from Tokyo to Berlin. Highly significant is the fact that Denny drew upon two sources for his stories. The Soviet press itself obligingly supplied the data about those whose crimes against the people and the state brought about their undoing. The foreign colony supplied his interpretative framework: the U.S.S.R. is almost, but not quite, on the verge of breakdown.

There is one thing that distinguishes the Soviet press from all others: in order that

the people may better guard themselves against spies and traitors, crimes and the punishment therefor are not kept hidden. That is why Denny is able to pick up the papers in Moscow, and, with little more effort, find the stuff which his boss back home likes. But it stands to reason that a government which can systematically publish such information is in no danger from its own people. Governments threatened from within scrupulously hide such developments.

In order to get the right political coloring for his tales, Denny resorted to the foreign colonies, especially the foreign diplomats, for an understanding of events. A close examination of his articles reveals that every juicy prediction stands or falls on this authority. As Stalin did not hesitate to say not long ago, the capitalist governments send ten times as many spies into the U.S.S.R. as they send into their capitalist rivals—and the latter get plenty. The foreign services of the capitalist powers in the Soviet Union are the snug harbors of these gentry—just as in Valencia and Madrid.

When they, too, are cleaned out, Harold Denny will write another four-article series complaining of the treatment of foreigners in the U.S.S.R.

## Whose Law Is It?

IF HE did nothing else, Tom Girdler in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Post Offices succeeded in making his position perfectly clear. He was arrogant, contemptuous of any rationale in industrial relations except outright employer dictatorship, and vulgar to the point of crassness. He asserted that he would abrogate any agreement whenever he so pleased—assuming that he would ever make one. He considered the C.I.O. irresponsible "the first time I heard of them."

In effect, this means that Tom Girdler considers himself outside the law, even as upheld by one of his favorite institutions, the Supreme Court. The Wagner act does not give the employer any right to pass upon the responsibility of a bona fide union before negotiating with it in good faith. In any event, a union's responsibility can be judged only after an agreement has been reached and subsequently broken. To hold the C.I.O. irresponsible "the first time I heard of them" is to pass judgment prior to any possibility of agreement or even negotiation.

What Girdler said amounts to conscious violation of the National Labor Relations Act. It is ironic that the man chiefly responsible for the present strike, with all its attendant violence, should coolly boast about his law-breaking policy before a

Senate committee. Add to this the fact that his main pretext for refusing to negotiate with the C.I.O. is its "illegal" and "sponsoring" character. Tom Girdler is a law breaker who has succeeded in defying the law because governors like Davey, mayors, sheriffs, and "citizens'" committees are letting the law with him.

Senator Arthur Vandenberg, one of the luminaries of the Republican Party, made proposals which would make Girdler's strong-arm policy "legal." He would reverse the plain intention of the Wagner Act through a series of amendments, presently "union-busting" in character. Under the new law, "a breach of contract" would be forbidden to collect dues from employees as well as employees could ask for an election to determine employee representation, giving employers power to coerce employees and spike union campaigns to win over a majority of the workers, and enter into a term (undoubtedly written) agreement with thinly-disguised company unions. Vandenberg would further prohibit "company" political assessments, require all officials to be citizens of the United States, forbid strikes "for the purpose of coercing or forcing any person to violate any contract or the laws of any state or the laws of the United States."

"I will not obey the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act," is Tom Girdler's position.

"I shall make the law over to suit Tom," says Senator Vandenberg.

## Davey in the Dumps

THE C.I.O. leaders throughout the seven states affected by the steel strike have declared that only 14,000 of the 100,000 strikers have passed through reinforced picket lines, and that the rest are shop foremen and clerics. Few workers have been misled by the intensive "back-to-work" propaganda campaign by local newspapers and police. Meanwhile, the terror has been intensified, particularly in Ohio. Governor Davey has had many mayors and local officials have blatantly violated their election mandate. Because Ohio law requires legislative consent to a state of martial law, the law has been circumvented by means of "proclamations" by sheriffs establishing military control. This strategy hands over the direct strike-breaking work to the National Guard, releases the police and sheriffs' deputies for terrorization through raids on homes, the arrest of hundreds of strikers, held incommunicado for days with no charge laid against them.

Governor Davey is reported to have

that he "committed political suicide" encouraging the strike-breakers. He is, of course, involved in the negotiations between the Republic Steel officials and Major General Light, commander of 5000 National Guard troops in Mahoning Valley, where plans are being made to reopen the mines. The C.I.O. has asked that the courts enjoin the strikers from using "proclamations" as a means of making weapons, that the strikers form and continue effective picketing, that a widespread protest movement among progressive organizations be developed. The federal and local governments have urged to reestablish civil rights in the strike areas and enforce the Wagner act against the reactionary steel barons.

### *ity and the Internationals*

THE resignation of Louis de Brouckère and Friedrich Adler, chairman and secretary of the Second (Labor and Socialist) International, respectively, in the course of negotiations with the Communist International, recalls the paralyzing split in the organization during the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. At that time, too, a section of the Second International, including the French and Spanish parties, supported united action with the Comintern, but the Czechoslovakian and Scandinavian Socialist parties and the British Party successfully blocked the proposal. De Brouckère and Adler now appear to have resigned rather than stand by while negotiations for unity of action over Spain ended the same fate.

Conversations between representatives of two labor internationals began very seriously on June 21. A joint declaration that it was unanimously recognized "it is now more necessary than ever that action in defense of Spain be carried out in general agreement, as possible and with all means, without unnecessary friction."

A few days later, however, George Dimitroff, general secretary of the Communist International, found it necessary to urge the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions that the resignations of De Brouckère and Adler "should not, in our opinion, in any way hinder the organizations of the international proletariat from working in coordination at this moment of historical responsibility, when it is a question of the existence of the heroic Spanish people and of maintaining international peace." Dimitroff also referred to "the presence of divergent opinions within the leadership of

the Labor and Socialist International."

In conclusion, Dimitroff made three concrete proposals: (1) that the international labor organizations urge the governments of Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union to take joint measures for the immediate recall of the armed forces of Italy and Germany from Spain, to lift the blockade of Spanish democracy and recognize all the international rights of the Spanish government; (2) that a joint demand be addressed to the League of Nations for the application of the Covenant against the fascist aggressors; and (3) that a joint call be addressed to the working class of all countries "to do everything in their power in order to realize these demands."

Meanwhile, no word of support for united working class action on an international scale has come from the Socialist Party of the United States or from any of its leaders.

### *The Pink Blight*

DROUGHT in Nebraska is no longer news. Indeed, so rare is sufficient rain that farmers have been known to stretch out their hands unbelievably to the falling drops, to feel if they are real. In much the same way recently, at the conclusion of a performance by a W.P.A. theater group, Nebraska farmers came up to the footlights to touch the actors with their hands—to see whether they were indeed real, and not shadows on a silver screen. The first time they had ever seen the living theater!

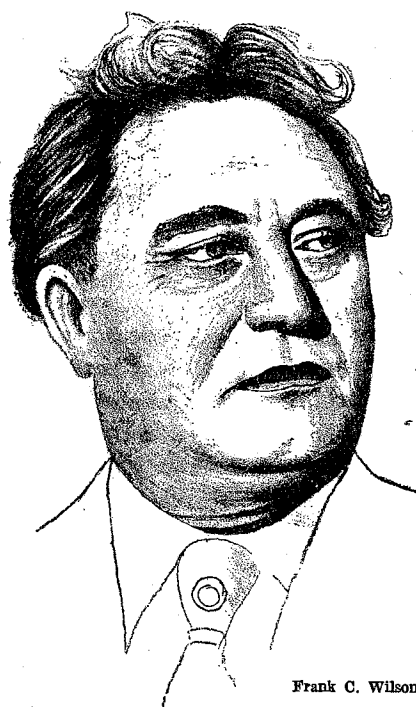
But now, like a dust-storm, the cultural

drought is returning. A storm of pink dismissal slips has completely wiped out the Nebraska federal theater. Those of Rhode Island and Delaware were also buried in the pink snow. The number of states in which federal theaters have been functioning has been reduced by these and recent layoffs from thirty-five to twenty-two. "We have been condemned to starve," read a crepe-hung placard in the headquarters of the federal theater project this week. Was it the workers of the federal theater speaking or was it the Nebraska farmers? Obviously, both.

And the pink blight that has attacked the federal theater has smitten the other art projects as severely. The music project's madrigal group has been badly hit; the artists' easel and graphic projects have been crippled; the dance and writers' projects have been shattered and temporarily demoralized. Everywhere the story is the same: work which has received wide acclaim and done wonders to slake the cultural thirst of millions of Americans has been shut off. And at the same time, the eager and able cultural workers have been condemned to the slow starvation of home-relief rolls.

Why? Because the forces of the Right, who contribute nothing to our culture but cruelty, anarchy, and waste, have, through generations of experience, learned how to crack the whip over the government to get results. But the progressive forces are learning. In New York the current wave of lay-offs was countered by tactics of hitherto unmatched militancy and effectiveness. Sixteen dancers staged a hunger strike that meant business; several of them collapsed, but it was the administration that did the final collapsing and gave victory to the strikers. And the administration chief of the five arts projects in New York, knuckling under to a two-day siege which marooned him in his office, obtained from Washington the grant of the central demand of the besieging hundreds from the art projects. A picket line of women—wives, mothers, and sisters of W.P.A. workers—circled City Hall in what the *New York Times* said was the largest demonstration ever staged there.

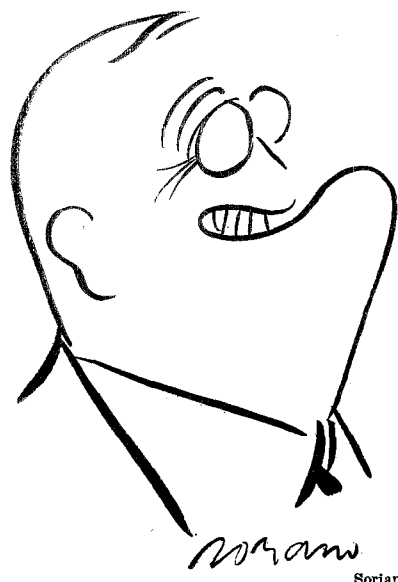
Yes, the progressive forces are learning. But the trade-union movement, in some places, has not yet reached the point where it stands shoulder to shoulder on the great issues of the day such as W.P.A. The New York City Central Trades & Labor Council, for example, under the domination of the reactionary A.F. of L. official, J. P. Ryan, forbade a strike by the unions in sympathy with the W.P.A. workers. A progressive Central Trades & Labor Council would have been a different story.



Frank C. Wilson

*Dimitroff—made three proposals*

Meanwhile that different story was being told in Milwaukee, where the Workers' Alliance, national W.P.A. and unemployed organization, after reflecting officials, decided to go to work at once organizing a national "pink-slip march" on Washington. By carrying on such actions on a national scale, and by stimulating its locals everywhere to organize as solidly and campaign as militantly as its white-collar affiliate in New York, the City Projects Council does, the Workers' Alliance can yet turn the tide. And one of its most important lines of action will be the carrying of its long-held objective: united action with the trade unions.



He got a "good press"

### What's the Matter . . .

JOHN DOS PASSOS has returned from Europe with pretty much the same feeling of exultation as did the expatriates of the twenties who bade farewell to the Left Bank after the franc became expensive. "Sure, we've got our class war, we've got our giant bureaucratic machines for anti-human power, but I can't help feeling that we are still moving on a slightly divergent track from the European world," writes Dos Passos in the current issue of *Common Sense*.

It is not some tub-thumping Congressman from the Corn Belt, but the philosophic anarchist and famous rebel who exclaims: "The Atlantic is a good wide ocean. An American in 1937 comes back from Europe with a feeling of happiness, the relief of coming up out into the sunlight from a stifling cellar, that some of his grandfathers must have felt coming home from Metternich's Europe after the Napoleonic wars, the feelings all the immigrants have had when they first saw the long low coast and the broad bays of the new world. At least we still have alternatives."

In France, he discovered that "the French people are not happy about their predicament" (are the American people any happier?). In Spain, he found that "the working class is defending itself with magnificent heroism" (are we any better here?). In Great Britain, he learned that "the interests of the ruling clique are definitely opposed to the interests of the aggregation as a going concern" (are our ruling cliques so different?).

In France and Spain, he found that the Communists were supplying "the only vigorous leadership on the left," though "hog-tied by the Kremlin." "Hog-tied," that is, short of supplying "the only vigorous leadership on the left." What is the alternative in America? It may be hard to believe, but Dos Passos writes: "Not all the fascist-

hearted newspaper owners in the country, nor the chambers of commerce, nor the armies of hired gun-thugs of the great industries can change the fact that we have the Roundhead Revolution in our heritage and the Bill of Rights and the fact that the democracy in the past has been able, under Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln, and perhaps a fourth time (it's too soon to know yet) under Franklin Roosevelt, to curb powerful ruling groups."

So Franklin Roosevelt is better than the people's fronts of France and Spain, and that's why the class war in America offers "alternatives" which are absent in sad, old Europe!

### . . . With John Dos Passos

WHAT'S behind this strange metamorphosis?

Apart from the palpable illogic in most of Dos Passos's preferences, it is necessary to get at the root of some of the motivations behind his new allegiances. Significantly enough, the expatriates of the twenties did not rediscover America's "class war and bureaucratic machines." They found new meaning in homespun themes and local scenery formerly neglected. But then, they came back at a time when the entire middle class was desperate owing to a worldwide economic blight—and their pretensions were not revolutionary.

It is significant that Dos Passos chooses to say "farewell to Europe" on rather political grounds. Not a word about the relative merits of the girls, and the food, and the local customs; rather the class war and the bureaucracies. For these are different times. The middle class is no longer desperate—and Dos Passos used to be an advocate of lost causes.

Nevertheless, when a man like Dos Passos forgets his past sufficiently to applaud the Atlantic because it separates Europe from America, when Roosevelt (it's too soon to know yet) is preferable to the people's fronts of France and Spain (it's not too soon to know yet), then some fundamental forces are operating, and John Dos Passos is reflecting them. It appears to be easier for a radical to be "tired" in 1937 than in 1933. *Even if you take pot-shots at the Kremlin in 1937-38.* These pot-shots hardly compensate for that eloquent Dos Passos phrase: "The Atlantic is a good wide ocean."

### The Charm School

READERS of the NEW MASSES who compared Marguerite Young's article last week on the state of affairs in the Democratic Party with the news reports of President Roosevelt's little fiesta on the Jefferson Islands were struck by the contrast. Miss Young's piece spoke of the serious cleavages in the party which the love feast would attempt to heal; the news reports in the capitalist press spoke of "fun and frolic," a Senate-House baseball game, and "harmony." Attempts at questioning the President on program and policy were circumvented by group singing. There is no question that with his accustomed skill, Mr. Roosevelt achieved a "good press" on his little island shindig.

But changing the tone of news reports about the state of affairs in his party and changing the actual situation are very different things. Signs of the continuing cleavages were not emphasized, but were evident nevertheless. Progressive Representative Maury Maverick was twice singled out for "humorous" attacks; once when he was designated as leader of a C.I.O. "demagogues' club" organized as a counter-move to the official "demagogues' club" for whom the reactionary Representative Martin Dies of Texas was the spokesman; another time when he was named president of the "Ananias club" for saying that it had been agreed to push through the Roosevelt legislative program this session. This reflected an unwillingness on the part of one wing of the Democratic Party to go ahead which is clearly in line with the announced intention of such reactionary Republicans as Senator Vandenberg to obstruct the legislative program by filibustering. Further evidence of the intransigent opposition of certain Democrats was their boycott of the Jefferson Islands conference or their grudging acceptance of invitation. And comment on the President's courtship was unchanged, the progressives for pushing it through at once, and the reactionaries for

killing it or for letting it die in filibuster. Between the lines was seen ample corroboration of the statement of Earl Browder in the last election campaign that the Democratic Party is based on a conglomeration of groups

seriously divided by various economic and regional differences, the continued unity of which will sooner or later have to be based on a realignment of forces with more homogeneous interests.

## Chamberlain and Hitler

**W**AS it a coincidence that Prime Minister Chamberlain bade the British people exercise "caution, patience, and self-restraint" just about forty-eight hours before Hitler shouted to the Bavarian Nazis: "Germany needs Spanish ore, and that is why we want a nationalist government in Spain"? Most accounts of Hitler's declaration take a rather comforting view of the situation by ascribing it as a reply to Chamberlain. Is not the truth rather in reverse? Was not Chamberlain's piously phrased statement a deliberate and informed anticipation of Hitler's?

*Chamberlain said:* "The policy of the [British] government has been consistently directed to one end and one end only—to maintain the peace of Europe by confining the war to Spain." *Hitler said:* "Speeches in parliament and by foreign statesmen will not affect our decisions." Of course not. Not when those speeches state, in so many words, that aggression, intervention, and even open war will not disturb the calm of Downing Street—so long as they are confined to bleeding Spain.

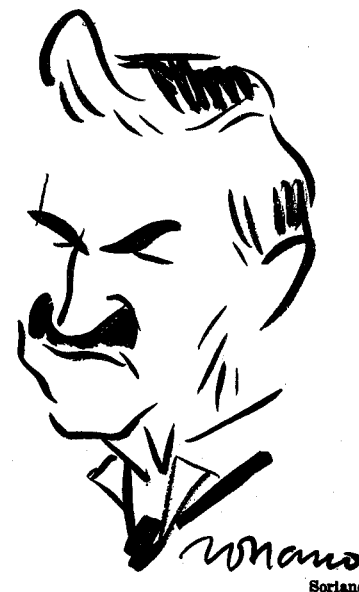
*Chamberlain said:* "Let us try to keep cool and neither say nor do anything to precipitate the disaster which everybody really wishes to avoid." Twenty-four hours later, *Mussolini wrote* in his paper, *Popolo d'Italia*: "Italy has not been neutral in this conflict, but has fought, and victory, there, will be hers." Coincidence or anticipa-

tion? What does it mean to keep cool when the fascist powers openly boast of their aggression?

The plain though ugly truth seems to be that the rulers of the British empire have deliberately adopted a policy which assists and facilitates the fascist aggression. Carefully cultivated British myths have somewhat obscured this point. When it is alleged, for example, that the British are conciliating the Nazis because British rearmament is still unfinished, some conclude that Britain's rearming will bring an anti-fascist course of action. This is a lamentable error of judgment. The British honeyed words about rearmament was just so much pretense and hypocrisy under cover of which former Prime Minister Baldwin sabotaged the League of Nations and scuttled collective security. As British rearmament progresses, the pretense is progressively dropped, but the essential line of policy conciliatory to fascism remains. Rearmament dispenses with the pretense, but it strengthens the fraud.

Another carefully cultivated myth is that the fascist powers are weakened by successful aggression. According to this legend, the Nazis will have so much trouble holding Spain in subjection, once conquered, that the rest of the world will be able to remain in peace and contentment. This theory, like the previous one, is persistently refuted by events. Did the Nazi occupation of the Rhineland slow down Nazi demands for more, more, more? Did the Italian conquest of Ethiopia hamstring Mussolini? Obviously not. For fascism, resting on a very unstable and narrow base among the people, needs just these "victories" to vindicate its glorification of violence, terror, and war. It is widely acknowledged that Hitler's main stock-in-trade is the claim that he has restored Germany to its former status as a great, predatory power through successful betrayals of the obligations of civilized society.

It would be naïve to think that the British rulers prefer this state of affairs. There is no telling when they will lose control over this Frankenstein monster which will turn against the British bankers who have so liberally nourished it. They are, however, alive to the fundamental Nazi drive eastward. In their view, a fascist explosion in



Chamberlain—purveyed hypocrisy

that direction is a guarantee of British safety. Under the present tory regime, the dominant policy has been that of avoiding friction with Germany at all costs even if the price be loss of one strategic position after another. After all, the British foreign office knows perfectly well that a fascist Spain will change the relationship of forces, perhaps permanently, against England. Its hope, probably illusory, is that these fascist aggressions are merely the necessary preparations for the war which, it is hoped, will damage the U.S.S.R. and exhaust Britain's fascist rivals.

It is necessary that the ruses employed by Great Britain to mask this policy be recognized for what they are worth. When it is said that British policy seeks to confine the war to Spain—and that this is the only end in view—then it must be understood that this is the equivalent to a free hand for a fascist war against Spain. When "caution, patience, and restraint" are urged in the face of Mussolini's declaration that "Italy has not been neutral in this conflict, but has fought," then the intention is to stifle that indignation which every person spontaneously feels at the spectacle of an unprovoked slaughter of a fine people.

The British do not find it easy to pursue this conciliatory policy, hence all the fine talk about peace and self-control. The Nazi demands always increase, and it is problematical whether the Tories at the head of the government will be able to get away with much more in the way of double-dealing. The British workers awoke in time to contribute great services to the Russian revolution by refusing to ship munitions to the interventionists, and there is a possibility that similar action may soon be taken in respect to the Spanish people.

Caution and patience and restraint at such a moment are equivalent to cowardice, deception, and dishonor.



Hitler—"answered" Chamberlain

# Waifs of the Storm

*The Basque refugee children in England hold tight to two things: their poor, precious toys—and solidarity*

By Naomi Mitchison

ON an English day of grey cloud and driving wind, four thousand Basque children landed at Southampton, to be welcomed by all decent people of the British Isles. All night the great lighted ship had waited outside the harbor, packed with children able to sleep at last without the terror of a snatched waking and the nightmare crashing in their ears. By morning helpers were waiting, baths, food, and the big buses to take them along to the camp.

The first thing that happened to them was that they were shot—with movie cameras; they ducked, and cried, and ran for shelter, so like is one modern invention to another. How were they to know these were not machine guns? All the trust that children should have in the kindness of the world was utterly shattered; it will take months at least to rebuild. They went cautiously into the big buses that took them to the camp, and hardly answered the cheering that greeted them there. Then a twelve-year-old hopped down, a strange little newcomer with his red socks and the pointed hood of his mackintosh. He was put at the head of the boys' queue; and, when boys and girls were formed up, they marched off through the camp to the furthest tents.

But they didn't know they were safe yet, they couldn't believe it. A sight-seeing aeroplane came swooping low over the camp, and panic-stricken children shrieked and bolted, cowering in the tents. The bogey-man had

come real this spring; they knew that rapidly rising wasp-hum—and what comes after. Not one of those children but knows. The helpers hardly asked why they were crying or what the matter was if any face was whiter, and more drawn, and tear-stained than another. Brothers and sisters were still out there; so were fathers and mothers. Alive or dead. Sometimes everyone was dead. Their whole world had been blotted out.

Yet they were a good deal more cheerful than some of the helpers expected; they bubbled over with excitement. They had heard and imagined so much of England. They wanted sweets, cinemas—and cigarettes! Someone found a black cat which had strayed into the camp; that was an unlucky color for them, and they chased it out with whoops and yells!

MOST OF THE CHILDREN had been healthy, bright, normal boys and girls. Some have been worse starved than others, but most should recover now that they have food. How surprising it was to see butchers' shops! They couldn't believe it at first. They had almost all been sea- or nerve-sick; they were crowded all over the ship—four of them in the cabin of Captain Ricardo Fernandez, the skipper who brought her over, and who was in command when rebel aeroplanes had tried to sink his ship the day before the children came on board. Some of them had walked miles to the harbor, since Franco's air-raids had even stopped the children's buses. And then the head wind against the boat! But, in the middle of it all, news had come that chaser planes had reached Bilbao, planes for them and their fathers and brothers; even the most seasick sat up and clapped at that.

They brought their poor little parcels on shore with them, parcels hastily tied up in newspaper, the oddest bundles. A few had hold of some toy, some familiar thing grasped tightly in this strange place. They stick together, holding hands often; no wonder that the Spanish embassy has had to refuse the kindest offers of adoption. Besides, it thinks the English are a childless race; these children would have to be overwhelmingly tidy, they wouldn't be able to play football in an English home. They will learn before they go that there are English boys and girls very ready to welcome them, but that is not the main point. These children must stay together; they have learned the bitter lesson of solidarity; now they must get the good of it.

There are several children from bombed Guernica, children who had seen flaming, roasting hell, and their own people in it. The

rest were very tender with them, brought them forward with arms around them. The Guernica children had seen the end of their childhood, and walked wearily away from it, with a few clothes, an ox, a broken doll, lucky if they had a mother's hand to hold to. They walked into waiting, tense, raided Bilbao. It takes a little time after that to get used to buttercups.



Flora Schofield

No one found it easy to question any of the children. The answers were too difficult for safe people with homes to face. "I'm nine years old. No, the rest are fighting. Father? He's in bed. He is rather ill." That gives a family picture. Or again: "Maria of the Angels. Fourteen. Yes, I was at a secondary school, and passed my matric. I don't know what I shall be. You see it's all changed now." She doesn't know. None of them know. It isn't in their hands or in their parents' hands any longer.

There is only one mother with them; she has come because she has five children on board—one a baby; but she has left four behind to fight. Otherwise the helpers have had to be mothers to these five- and six-year-olds, to make them feel safe, if they can. The wife and daughter of the Spanish ambassador were there, going from group to group, talking and smiling, with kind hands and voices. So was the Basque representative, for these children the "mutikoak"—lovely Basque word for a lot of kids!—feel themselves Basque to the core. And besides, friends from all over the country have sent clothes, and books, and toys. Here and there a manufacturer has sent food. Doctors and nurses have given their services. The children are welcome for as long as they need to stay.

And at home? Someone had a brilliant idea; she brought a packet of postcards for the children to write home on. A whole sack full came up to the Spanish embassy, to be stamped and sent off. That will be something. And a film of their arrival has been sent back to Bilbao, to the mothers and fathers. Perhaps they will never have seen these movies of their children. For they were facing the thing which we in England are trying to make the children forget—death from the air, the merciless low swoop with the machine-guns pointed wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of liberty.



Adelene Cross

# Rigidity Will Have to Alter

*A Pulitzer prize-winning American novelist sees the question of the writer's technique conditioned by the flux and complexity of the day*

By Josephine Johnson

In attempting to evaluate the experience of novelists who have dealt with social themes in recent years, critics have been sharply divided, both as to the formulation of the problems which confront the creative writer and as to the answers to those problems. For that reason we have asked two outstanding American novelists who have treated social themes to discuss certain aspects of the general problem. This article by Josephine Johnson and that by Millen Brand on the page opposite were focused on the following questions raised by us: (1) What new problems of technique confront the novelist who is concerned with a social theme? (2) How much guidance is there in such social novelists of the 1920's as Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, and Dos Passos? (3) What do you conceive to be the social effect, direct or indirect, of your work on the reader, and is the consciousness of such an effect an inhibiting or a liberating influence on the writer?—THE EDITORS.

**I**T IS difficult for an author to formulate any particular creed or testament of writing in these times, but unconsciously we work by certain standards and toward certain goals. I cannot speak except from a personal viewpoint—not because I believe that what I say is of universal value or representative, but because it is the only view on which one can honestly speak with authority. The problem of technique is a particular difficulty which confronts a writer in handling the many characters essential to a theme of large scope and action. Wide knowledge, mass action, mass stimuli, constant and varied sensation, collective discovery—these things which are today irrevocably a part of our lives—threaten to burst the orthodox conception of a novel

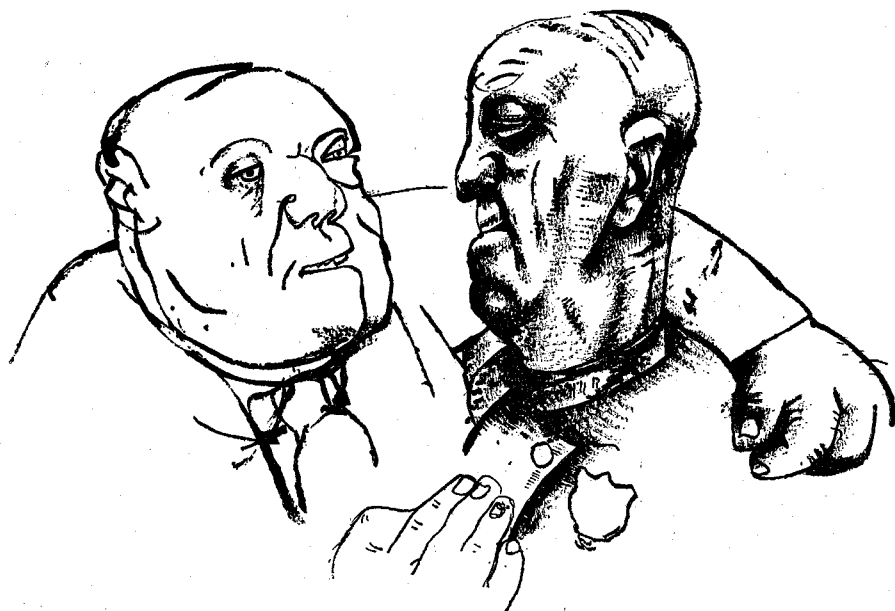
and spill out formlessly over the pages. Shall we express all this only as a background, concentrating development on only a few characters? Can an individual's problem or character ever be wholly dissociated from the communal life and treated as such? I believe that the showing of the world through individual reaction is still the most powerful and effective form of writing, the bringing to life and three-dimensional personality of what is otherwise one atom in a multiple swarm; but—and this is the answer to my second question—realizing that the environment is responsible for much of that individual's character. There is no doubt that any rigid form of writing will have to alter to be able to express the ever-increasing complexity, apparent confusion, and flux of these days. Personally I am not concerned about the technical definition of a novel. What is important is the thing itself accomplished. Is it good? Bad? Weak? Effective? Not is it classed this or labeled that. It is more important to consider the living body as a whole, asking if it is well and vigorous and beautiful in its own way. Not dissecting it to find out its organs and its ancestors.

I have felt under an obligation to make each line and word of writing in a book interesting and of some value in itself—to contribute, as a cell does, to the whole, and yet be justified in its own right. Perhaps it is necessary to build more spaciouly, to bore in order to convince; but surely the arid wastes of sand between

oasis and oasis of memorable writing only increase the irritation of the traveler rather than persuade him of the grandeur of the desert. We who write today of today are under the handicap of selecting the transitory from the enduring, and of being judged (naturally and inescapably) by contemporary myopia. The new phrase, the passing reference, the modern allusion may become in time mellowed by usage and the dignity of precedent, thus assuming the character of classic knowledge. We may know this is so, seeing ahead with humble prophecy through reference to the past; but today the words pop from the page like jack-in-the-boxes, and we are accused, naturally enough, of dated writing and newspaper timelessness, propaganda and ephemerality. These are things to be faced by any writer who wishes his work to be of lasting interest, and to survive beyond his time. And they are not easily answered.

The consciousness that one's work may be of social significance and effective in one way or another, can be both a driving force and a cautioning check on a writer. It is likely to make him hesitate and ponder too much over the consequences, to make him waver in the face of certain stubborn truths which do not fit into his planned effect. Shall I say this? Emphasize that? Omit this other because it may be misunderstood? Shall I leave this loophole for the opposition? These questionings are sometimes fatal, this social consciousness a winding sheet around creative growth. In spite of the driving force which a major belief may give, and the strong power which it momentarily engenders, if obeyed blindly, it is apt to hurtle the author over the cliff and result in unintentional suicide. It is the artist's very life-necessity to see with open eyes, to record, to sift, to create and interpret without the restrictions that limit a druggist or a mechanic. The author is not a writer of prescriptions.

The form of life is so fluid, so open to speculation and interpretation, that to impose rigid channels, even though glorifying them with the name of Social Obligation and Duty, is to run the risk of stagnation, more fatal than any flood. Truth is never obvious beyond all question. If a writer is honest, and conscious that he is not, after all, a mysteriously blessed and irresponsible gift of heaven to mankind, he will take upon himself the task of examining his position in relation to the world, and of finding truth wherever it is discoverable, and of creating what seems important according to his own standards and not the world measuring-rods of the hour.



John Holiker

*"But the steel company wouldn't like you if you became a movie star; we like you best as just a plain Chicago cop."*

# No Room for Narrow-Mindedness

*The author of "The Outward Room," in replying to some questions we posed, argues for conscious facing of reality*

By Millen Brand

**Y**OU ask whether old or new techniques are better to carry the weight of our new experience. I think it has been generally found that theme and technique are not completely separable, and, therefore, if new themes are used, new techniques are necessary. Perhaps the real argument is whether themes are new in a basic sense. I believe they are, as man has the power to gradually extend his knowledge of physical and social reality. In a limited way I would say my own book [*The Outward Room*], for example, deals with a new theme: that of the mechanics of mental illness and its cure, using the great body of knowledge opened up by Freud. The book uses Freudian psychoanalysis as it should be used, not for sexual exhibitionism, but to present an important therapy in action. This theme represents a limited but important frontier; that there are other new and challenging themes is evident from the work of a whole group of American novelists.

In reckoning the variety and thematic scope of these writers, importance should be given to both main and subsidiary themes. When any writer shows even conceivably fascist trends, the emphasis (as it should be) is very quickly noted. On the other hand, evidence of anti-fascist, democratic feeling should be noted with equal care and given its proper importance—so with a great many tendencies that could be cited in contemporary writing. When this kind of intelligent estimate is made and the larger shapes and directions emerge, it will probably be found that the present state of writing, in America and elsewhere (with some important exceptions), is highly encouraging.

Returning to the question of new techniques, it might be asked whether new techniques imply an abandonment of the past, whether they are best arrived at by refusing to look backward. I don't think that this is true. Everything new is built on work already done; this generality is true not only in writing, but in the field of knowledge, of politics, of theory. There are such great values in intelligently using what has gone before that I would very hesitantly like to suggest that any writer attempting new work should begin by seeing how much has already been accomplished, and I would further recommend that he place a high estimate on his own past and on his personal technique. It takes a great deal of effort, usually, to find the way to say what is real to the writer personally; when he has found the way to do that, he should believe in it and go forward undisturbed by those who tell him he is "limited."

Your second question is about guidance

from the social novelists of the twenties, as representative of whom you mention Dreiser, Dos Passos, and Upton Sinclair. I must confess I've never read Sinclair, but I have read a great deal of both Dreiser and Dos Passos.



Lithograph by  
Stella Moss

To me, though, these men would be hard to isolate as novelists of the twenties, either in time or in influence. As to guidance, I can't say I'm conscious of very much guidance from them—not nearly as much, let's say, as from Henri Barbusse whose *L'Enfer* (not too good a novel) made a deep impression on me many years ago. Yet in this I may be wrong, because literary influence and guidance, like Freudian repressions, have a way of working underground. I do think, though, that the work of European writers of the immediate past has probably had as important an effect as that of Americans in preparing for the work of novelists of the present decade.

And now comes the difficult third question: "What do you conceive to be the social effect—direct or indirect—of your work on the reader?" This question deserves to be answered, however reluctantly, and however unlikely a writer feels he is to discover a true answer. With such qualification, here then are some things I would like to believe about *The Outward Room*: that it is a pro-labor book, that it humanizes a case of mental illness, and that it presents understandingly a phase of Freudian therapy. All of these effects

of the book, I think, may be conceived of as social. Beyond them the book has sufficient limitations, and these effects—if these are its social effects—are subordinate to the primary purpose of telling a story.

Of the several effects, the one I had most in mind from the start was that of humanizing the public attitude to the mentally ill. Since Clifford Beers's book and the founding of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, there has been a steady improvement in the medical care of the mentally sick (even with the handicap of insufficient funds in many cases), but the public is still backward and even morbid in its attitude. A psychiatrist in Central Islip, L. I., recently told me that one of the things that most discourages him is that, when one of his patients goes home from the hospital, there are always "friends" to spread the word and make him feel estranged and self-conscious (as in the case of men returned from jail). Mental illness is so human even in its most tragic extremities that it should arouse nothing

but a human attitude in the public—and the mentally ill should find all possible sympathy and encouragement.

As part of your question on social effects, you ask about the "liberating force" or the opposite of writing with a "consciousness" of possible effects. Nobody, I think, can be completely sure of the validity of his beliefs or purposes, but good writing usually comes from some degree of intelligent awareness of the forces at work in society. Balzac said in one of his *Lettres à l'Etrangère*, speaking of another writer, "Au lieu de réveiller des idées, ses héros . . . ne se relient pas aux grands intérêts de la vie et des lors ne représentent rien." (Instead of awakening ideas, his heroes . . . are not linked to the larger forces of life and therefore represent nothing.) While opinion may differ on what the larger forces are, a writer should want to be aware of much that is beyond the individual. Tragically, the compelling problems of economic uncertainty and war which inevitably condition most of us living today, leave no room for creative narrow-mindedness. There should be a "liberating force" in facing actively a reality still obdurate to our human needs and hopes.

# A Letter From Harbin

*Manchuria finds that the iron heel of Japanese imperialism leaves some very vicious footprints*

By "Ming"

SINCE the Japanese occupation of our four northeastern provinces six years ago, we, more than thirty million Chinese inhabiting this dark spot of the earth, have been subjected to the most brutal oppression, slaughter, opium-poisoning, and other forms of inhuman treatment. But due to the all-eye spy system organized here by the Japanese and the severe mail censorship, some of us are cowed into silence, while others who attempted to expose the true situation were caught and tortured to death. Consequently what we, a people in captivity, are suffering in the bloody clutches of Japanese imperialism is little known to the outside world. I pray that this letter may escape the censorship net and safely reach my fellow-countrymen outside Manchuria as well as the general public.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, we are actually fed to the dogs. In order to terrorize the underground anti-Japanese movement and the volunteer troops now operating throughout Manchuria, the Japanese have lately resorted to the large-scale training and breeding of man-eating dogs. At first, the Japanese showed their humaneness and sense of decency by burying alive the lower body of the "prisoner," or beating him unconscious before they set the dogs on him. The animals, however, soon acquire a keen appetite for human flesh. They jump at the "prisoner" as soon as the victim is put into their cage. While the beasts are thus busily engaged in tearing open a human stomach or tasting a warm, trembling, human heart, the self-styled champions of the civilization of the East look vastly amused by this gruesome sight. The dogs are also taught police duties. At night, they are allowed to run wild all along the South Manchuria Railway track. Any peasant who stumbles into their sight, unaware of the danger, is immediately attacked and devoured. It has become a common experience of the villagers living in the vicinity to hear, in the dead of the night, the agonizing groans and cries of a human victim.

The ingenuity and resourcefulness with which the dogs are trained is something unique in the art of premeditated murder. The Japanese begin by making dummies fashioned exactly like an anti-Japanese volunteer soldier or a typical North China peasant, wearing a short, cotton-padded coat, home-spun trousers, and thick cloth shoes. Even the belt, so popular with the peasants, is not overlooked. The dummies are then set up at all military strategic points, as well

as along railway tracks. Dogs are led to them and commanded to attack them repeatedly until they are torn to shreds. The dummies are later replaced with human beings.

**NIGHT SEARCH:** The Japanese aggressors live in constant fear of our anti-Japanese volunteer troops. This fear leads them to institute what is called the "night search." No sooner is there a rumor of the movement of volunteer troops in a certain region than Japanese troops are already on their way there to execute such a search. After they have surrounded the place water-tight, they start a house to house search. They round up all those whose names are not on the registration list. If a registered resident happens to be absent from home on that particular night, the person who is supposed to be responsible for him is arrested. These night raids offers the Japanese a golden opportunity to rob our homes of valuables and to rape our women. For this reason, the Japanese militarists undertake a night search on the slightest excuse, with the result that people in Manchuria nowadays go to bed at night with trembling hearts lest the most horrifying nightmare become a reality.

**CONCENTRATION CAMPS:** In their frantic efforts to prevent the able-bodied male population in Manchuria from joining the anti-Japanese volunteer troops, the Japanese militarists isolate and confine able-bodied farmers to a camping ground surrounded by barbed wire and trenches. They euphemistically call these camps "Communities of Great Harmony," and arrange to have Koreans and Japanese live there side by side with the Chinese, with the Japanese acting as guards, spies, and torturers, and exercising the power of life and death over the Chinese inmates. These forced-labor camps, which can be found almost in every county in the Kirin and Liaoning provinces, are rapidly being extended to all other parts of Manchuria.

**OUR HOMES,** barns, live-stock pens are burned down. Since last year, the Japanese have devised another tyrannical means of tightening their grip upon us. Under the so-called "collective village system," peasants living in small scattered villages are ordered to move into large villages in order to simplify the task of surveillance. Naturally, peasants thus ordered to move are reluctant to leave the fields which they have tilled from generation to generation, their tiny earthen huts where they were born, and, last

but not least, their ancestors' graves comfortingly near by. When the peasants persist in refusing to move, the Japanese summarily burn to the ground their homes, barns, and live-stock pens. Thus they are driven into the "collective villages," where, lacking means of providing new homes, they huddle together in mat tents or sleep in the open. Hungry and cold, the dispossessed peasants and their children mourn their lot with cries and tears such as would rend every human heart—except that of the Japanese militarists, who conscript Chinese peasant boys of fifteen to dig trenches around the "collective villages" as protection against attacks by the volunteer troops.

**THE JAPANESE** try to "civilize" China by poisonous drugs. The use of opium and other narcotics as a weapon of conquest by Japanese imperialists has now become a world scandal. The following figures will give you an idea as to the extent to which this policy has been carried out in Japanese-ruled Manchuria. According to official figures issued by the "Manchukuo" government, in Jehol province alone poppy cultivation for opium has increased in 1935 from 55,833 to 1,000,000 acres, which is about four-fifths of the total arable land. From the same source we also learn that twenty percent of the opium addicts are boys from fifteen to nineteen and twenty-five percent from nineteen to twenty-five years old. In each of the two large cities, Mukden and Changchun, there are about one thousand opium smoking and selling shops, while the cities of Antung and Kirin each have about eight hundred such places. In all other smaller commercial and industrial centers in Manchuria, these have never numbered less than three or four hundred.

But despite all shockingly cruel measures for subjugating Manchuria, the resistance of our people to the Japanese oppressor has at no time shown signs of weakening. That, on the contrary, it is becoming ever more strong is evidenced by the recent increased activities of the volunteer troops. We only hope that all the powerful political parties and military groups in China will soon unite and join hands with our heroic anti-Japanese volunteer fighters. In this struggle for freeing thirty million people in Manchuria from the onslaught of Japanese imperialism and fascism—a struggle no less significant than the present war in Spain—we count on the support of all democratically-minded and freedom-loving people of the world.

# At Long Last

*A veteran crusader for birth control reflects on the campaign in terms of the medical association's action*

By Margaret Sanger

**T**HE action of the American Medical Association in adopting the report of its committee to study contraceptive practices opens the door to a new epoch in preventive medicine. It marks the close of a twenty-year struggle for medical recognition of birth control as a legitimate practice.

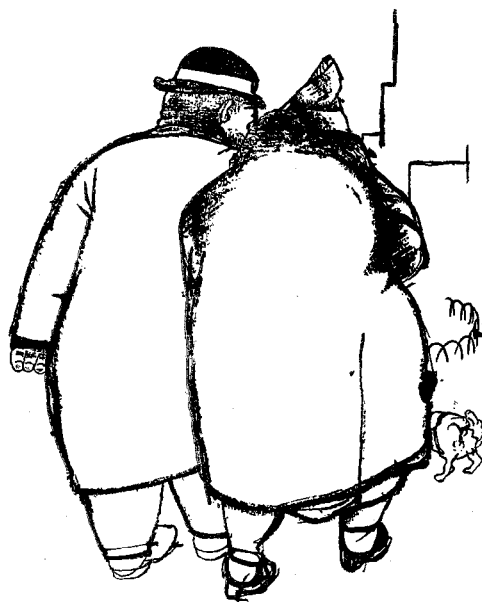
On the one hand I am filled with joy and gratitude that the policy underlying a program which I saw so clearly after my return from Holland in 1916 has been justified. Birth control, or "neo-malthusianism" as it was cumbersome called, was more a philosophical concept, a theoretical idea, than a practical matter. It was primarily an issue of free speech and free press. I saw, however, soon after I became convinced of the fundamental importance of the movement, that it must be considered as a medical and technical problem if it was to serve as an instrument for woman's freedom. This conviction was due in large part to my education as a trained nurse, in part to what I learned in the clinics of Holland, and from such men as Havelock Ellis.

From the day I opened America's first birth control clinic in Brownsville (New York City) in 1916 to the present time I have stood for medically directed clinics, for the principle of birth control as a necessary part of medical practice, and for recognition of this by the medical profession as a whole.

The student of public opinion will find much to intrigue him in a study of the gradual build-up which led this year to the court decision firmly establishing the legality of birth control, and in its medical recognition by the American Medical Association.

Fears and taboos, inertia and bigotry, ignorance and dogma blocked the path. One by one these barriers have been cleared away. Support from individual physicians with vision and courage came first. Support from leading religious denominations soon followed. Even the Catholic Church, previously the outstanding enemy of birth control, was forced to recognize the need for family limitation when it sponsored the rhythm, or so-called safe period, method. Dr. Leo Latz's book, *The Rhythm*, which carries on its fly-leaf the phrase "Published With Ecclesiastical Approbation," gives reasons for family limitation which agree point for point with those advocated in birth-control literature. The Catholic Church has wriggled out of its absurd and inconsistent position by conceding the truth of the principles of birth control, but it differs on methods.

Gradually more and more medical schools



John Heliker

included instruction on contraceptives in their curricula, and articles on the subject both in medical and lay magazines increased in number and improved in quality year by year. The demonstration clinic in Brownsville was closed as a "public nuisance," but the gesture served its purpose; in the test case arising from that step the courts ruled that physicians were permitted to give birth-control instruction "for the cure and prevention of disease."

Thus a group of judges admitted twenty years ago that birth control was a medical problem, which affected health and was part of preventive medicine. A broad interpretation of the word "disease" opened the way for giving birth-control instruction for economic as well as health reasons.

THE HISTORY of birth control clinical service, which stemmed from this decision, is another story. But all progress and activity in this field has had a bearing on the victories of today. On the strength of the interpretation of the New York state law rendered by the courts, I founded the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau in 1923. It has been serving the women of New York and vicinity ever since. It has, to date, advised more than 58,000 patients. From this one clinic the movement has grown to 350 clinics scattered all over the country, all medically directed, all keeping scientific records, and functioning under medical advisory boards composed of leading physicians in their respective communities.

Meanwhile evidence as to the medical necessity for birth control was piling up. Studies carried out by the U.S. Children's Bureau

proved the necessity of planning and spacing families. The inquiry into the causes of infant and maternal mortality stressed the inescapable relationship between infant deaths and children born too close together. It showed the correlation between the age of the mother and maternal deaths, and the effect of financial ability to provide proper maternal and infant care upon the chance of survival for both mother and child.

Medical evidence as to conditions when pregnancies should be avoided or postponed was finding its way into medical journals. The obvious truth that birth control—the prevention of conception—is far preferable to abortion—that is, termination of pregnancy after conception has taken place—was increasingly emphasized.

The demand for medical recognition grew. Outstanding among physicians who courageously advocated birth control as a medical necessity was Dr. Robert L. Dickinson of the National Committee on Maternal Health. Ever a fearless crusader, he fought against the taboos and inhibitions which made the medical profession ignore the whole field of sex. Dr. Prentiss Willson of Washington, D. C., was moved to action by the testimony presented at our Congressional hearings on a birth control bill to amend the obsolete Comstock statutes. Feeling that physicians were letting the lay public fight the battles they themselves should wage, he organized the National Medical Committee on State and Federal Birth Control Legislation. The support of individual doctors developed into support, formally taken through resolutions, of organized groups of local, county, and state medical societies and of national medical organizations.

The wonder, in retrospect, is that the American Medical Association's action was so long delayed. For while the doctors were dallying, while questions of expediency and politics delayed their action, women and babies were dying needlessly. One-fourth of all maternal deaths in this country are caused by abortions. And abortions occur, for the most part, among married women with several children, who take this tragic and desperate means of preventing the birth of another child they cannot provide for. Birth control would have saved their lives. It would also have saved the lives of countless infants who died because their mothers were too depleted in health to give them a fair start in life.

In 1924 Dr. William Allen Pusey advocated birth control in his presidential address before the annual convention of the American Medical Association. The following year the

section on obstetrics, gynecology, and abdominal surgery of the Association passed a resolution favoring "the alteration of existing laws, wherever necessary, so that physicians may legally give contraceptive information to their patients in the regular course of practice." But there, as far as the Association was concerned, the matter rested for eight years.

IT TOOK THREE YEARS, from 1932 to 1935, for the Association to appoint a committee to study the subject. Its first report a year ago was marked by timidity, confusion of thought, and an unwillingness to consider the problem in the only way physicians should consider it, as a medical issue.

Its second report, adopted in Atlantic City on June 8, 1937, brings the story, finally, to a "happy ending." Birth control was recognized at long last, by the medical profession as a whole. The report recommends: (1) that the American Medical Association take such action as may be necessary to make clear to physicians their legal rights in relation to the use of contraceptives; (2) that the Association undertake the investigation of materials, devices and methods; (3) that thorough instruction with respect to the various factors pertaining to fertility and sterility, be promoted in medical schools.

Thus the Association has sanctioned the legality of birth control, medical control of methods and materials, and medical education.

The full report and further findings on the subject are to be printed in the *Journal* of the Association, thus making them accessible to all physicians, and, indeed, to any interested member of the general public.

"Information concerning contraception," says the report, "is admittedly available to persons in favorable economic circumstances." This has been my contention for years. Women who have the fee to pay private physicians can and do secure contraceptive advice. But the thousands upon thousands of women whose only contact with physicians is through free clinics have been denied it. The 350 clinics of which I spoke are doing yeoman's vice, but they cannot begin to take care of who should have their help.

at the future is bright. Nothing now pre-

vents public-health organizations from giving birth-control advice to those who need it. Poor parents, as well as rich, can now secure instruction on how to plan their families and space their children. They need no longer be forced through ignorance to have children they cannot afford to rear adequately. And women need no longer be at the mercy of blind chance, helpless victims forced to undertake motherhood when they are physically unfit.

I place all these much to be desired conditions in the present, but my enthusiasm outruns the facts, I fear. This rosy picture still

lies in the future. But it can and should exist, and we, the public, can make it come to pass. For birth control is today a part of human knowledge, which must not be denied to all who want it and need it.

The NEW MASSES—and the "old"—can proudly celebrate the 1937 birth-control victories, for through the long years they have given fearless support to the movement. In 1914, when I launched the first birth-control magazine in America, *The Woman Rebel*, the *Masses* said: "We must thank Margaret Sanger for speaking out clearly and quietly for popular education in the means of preventing conception. And if she goes to court—"we must go too and stand behind her and make her martyrdom, if martyrdom it must be, the means of that very publicity she is fighting to win. There is no more important stand, and no stand that requires more bravery and purity of heart, than this one she is making."

The old *Masses* and the NEW MASSES have always seen clearly that legal obstruction and medical obscurantism is class injustice, that it denies to the poor what is the privilege of the rich.

The way is open today for justice in this field. For all parents knowledge which is their right and due, so that they may bring into the world only wanted children, with the heritage of sound bodies and sound minds.



"Yawpin' about Independence Day, Your Honor,  
and resistin' a sock on th' head."

★ ★ ★

## Deepavali, or Festival of Lamps

BOMBAY, INDIA

O merry flames of lamps tonight!  
How like to poignant tongues you lick  
The darkness of the earth grown sick  
With corpses hidden out of sight.  
With what pathetic glows you catch  
That darkness up and strive to make  
A festival for rich men's sake,  
But O, behind the very match  
That lit you lurks the bitter tale  
Of factories which make men pale.

Speak not of festivals to me:  
Weak undernourished children move  
With death tonight, and only prove  
The lamps of your *deepavali*  
But treacherous traitors to the black  
And tragic moaning that is theirs,  
Each man who lights them stoops and shares  
In a blind dastardly attack  
Upon the lampless homes of those  
Through which but darkness comes and goes.

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA.

# READERS' FORUM

## Milk for political prisoners' kids—Who likes "Tsar to Lenin"?—Dixie Reds and Western Unionists

• The Prisoners' Relief Fund of the International Labor Defense is now conducting its third annual milk drive to supply the children of political prisoners with one of the essentials of healthful childhood. These kids live in company towns, in the shadow of the mills and mines where their fathers worked, and joined the union, and went on strike to win a decent living for them. Their mothers just about make ends meet on the monthly relief check from the I.L.D. and what little they make when they can find work or can force from local relief authorities, who don't consider prisoners' families "unemployed."

The I.L.D. is asking for contributions to this milk fund on a very concrete basis: 11 cents for one quart of milk for one youngster for one day; 77 cents for the entire week; \$1.44 for two weeks; \$3.08 for one month, and \$10.23 for the entire summer. All contributions will be gratefully received at the I.L.D. offices, Room 610, 80 East 11th Street, New York City.

ROSE BARON,  
Director, Prisoners' Relief,  
International Labor Defense.

### A Phony Film in Colorado

• I would like to make a brief report on the showing of the film *Tsar to Lenin* in this city of Colorado Springs.

Your humble correspondent trekked all the way to the Colorado Springs Art Center to make a personal acquaintance with Mr. Eastman's special brand of poison, and witnessed a most extraordinary sight indeed.

Chauffeured limousine after limousine rolled up before the entrance. You can imagine my amazement and embarrassment. The place swarmed with gorgeously gowned women accompanied by gentlemen in soup and fish. A sight for Redfield's trenchant pen or for Burck to work up into an effective political cartoon.

All the feudal barons of the region turned out in real classy style, the whole motley crew of exploiting parasites, mine operators, and beet-field owners.

Unmistakably an important social event, the Russian revolution. Eastman has accomplished the impossible.

I might add that your writer was no fit company for such a brilliant gathering. So he hung on to his four bits. And as for the poison, the spectacle outside at the entrance was a complete and invaluable political lesson.

MIKE THOMPSON.

### Those Southern Traditions

• Along with Frank G. Tinker of your article *American Fliers in Spain* [issue of June 8], I, too, when I hear them speak of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, inquire, "Why not a Jeff Davis Battalion—or better still—Robert E. Lee Brigade?" I and many other Communists from Dixie still remember a certain war fought valiantly against the tremendous odds of northern industry. The traditional persistence of Confederate infantry has, I believe, entered into our Communist conditioning and helped to confirm us in active party struggles. Naming a brigade after Robert E. Lee or Stonewall Jackson might help activize southern sentiment in favor of Spain.

Now let the old-school sectarians snort! Even if the leaders were slaveholders, the rank-and-file and the teamsters were the lean white men from the hungry mountains and the faithful black teamsters. Our ancestors had enlisted in the Civil War believing it might somehow free us from the idiocy of the pre-bellum South. Today we, descendants of those Confederate marchers, are the new Confederates—

the Negro and white Communists of the South. The stars and bars are a good flag to raise the cheer in our throats in Spain. Seriously, many southern Communists are asking: "Why not a Stonewall Jackson Battalion over there in Spain?"

EDWARD CALLAHAN.

[We have an idea many readers will want to comment on the above letter. We hope such comments will be sent in promptly and limited to 200 words.—THE EDITORS.]

### Western Union Goes Union

• I was a half-hour early for my interview, so I stood in the lobby of the Chicago office building rehearsing answers to possible questions. I had the uneasy feeling inside that a job interview always gives me.

Gradually I became aware of the number of Western Union messengers passing to and from the telegraph office in the lobby. Outside the building, a group of about twenty uniformed boys were standing at one side of the doorway. Boys kept detaching themselves from the crowd, entering the building and approaching the door of the telegraph office, then, after hesitantly peering inside, returning to the street.

Finally they all huddled together briefly, and one boy emerged and came in alone. He was about fourteen, heavy-set and blond, with the broken skin of adolescence. Before the Western Union door he paused, pulled his cap firmly on his head, and entered.

In a moment the door swung open again as about fifteen messengers came swarming out. They were nervous and highly excited, though their laughter and talk was low-voiced and restrained. The blond boy, last, was unsmiling.

The crowd outside surged into the building the instant its members sighted the newcomers. The two groups mingled, the boys talking excitedly, but so low it was difficult to overhear them. I caught snatches.

"So you're coming out, huh?"

"Nice goin' fellas, nice goin'."

They milled uncertainly about the lobby, seeming like a lot of schoolboys engaged in breaking a rule, except that they looked very frightened. People coming from the elevators stopped at the sight of

the crowd edging around the knots of boys. Heads of the elevator starters protruded from cars, and the clerks from the lobby drug store filled the store's doorway. People were murmuring "strike to each other, and smiling adult smiles. Most of the grown people seemed caught between a desire to appear very amused and the contagion of the boys' excitement and fear. A man standing near me said: "So the damn kids got it now, huh?" "I'd strike their bottoms for them."

After some hesitation, the main body moved outside, leaving the blond boy and me to argue with one who hung back. The situation was serious, but the strikers remained passive, arguing with rather than coercing. When they talked a newcomer approached. The blond boy talked to him briefly. "Hell, yes," he said, "but what about this?" holding up a handful of messages.

"Bring them in and throw them on his desk. Give them no chance to say we're holding their property. Then come back." The blond boy was decisive.

As the leaders continued to argue with the blond boy, the manager of the branch came out. He was young, tall, and husky. Smiling patronizingly, ignored the group in the lobby and walked out to the boys gathered at the door. In a moment he was back, still smiling and shaking his head though bewildered. Approaching the boys in the lobby, he said, "What's the trouble, boys? What's this . . . ah . . . organizer of this . . . sit-down?" He smiled appealingly.

The messengers were silent.

"Well, speak up. What's the trouble? You to talk?"

The blond boy spoke. "We're just sick of being paid for eight dollars a week." He said it even a monotone, spacing the words "eight dollars a week." The onlookers stopped smiling, staring at the boy.

"Well, I guess we all want more money; but this is no way to get it." The manager smiled.

"We just can't get along on eight dollars a week," repeated the boy.

Abruptly the manager lunged at the blond boy, jerked the cap from the manager and behind his back.

"You're not taking my number," he said, his voice was a little high with excitement as he faced the manager squarely.

"Give me the cap . . . you're fired."

"You didn't hire me and you can't fire me."

"I'll remember you. You're through." The manager looked about him uneasily, realizing the situation verged on the ridiculous. For a moment he glared at the boy, then hurriedly turned and ran to the Western Union door.

The boy who had been hesitating quietly joined the crowd outside. The blond boy started after the manager.

"Hey," called a companion, "where're you going?" "Gotta see if they're all out," answered the blond boy. His cap still held behind his back, he entered the agency. Returning, he took a book from his pocket.

"Next place Franklin Street," he announced. "Fifteen guys in there. Let's go." He joined the boys outside, and they started down the street.

Slowly the crowd of onlookers broke up. People kept saying, "Those damned kids," in tones of admiration and in tones of disgust.

The Chicago papers that night handled the story as high farce comedy. The next day they announced that the messengers were back at work while negotiations went on. The boys won a raise, hour reductions, and recognition for bargaining.

LOUIS RIENDEAU.



Eld Gotelliffe

# REVIEW AND COMMENT

*A best-selling first novel—Lawrence of Arabia again—Politica peripatetica—Mental healing*

**M**R. BRAND's first novel\* has several things to recommend it. It is written with unfashionable tenderness. If it lacks a strong sense of human conflict, it has a lyrical sense of atmosphere and mood; if it has little perception of character, it has precision of fiction and a poetic feeling for phrase; if it is idyllic and romantic in treatment, nevertheless it is generous and understanding in its sympathies.

It is a dramatic story of insanity and its cure in a young girl. But Mr. Brand has little taste for what is clinical and realistic. The story leans far over to the side of what is the poetry and the parable hidden in the knowledge of modern psychiatry. Mr. Brand has chosen as his heroine a young girl, obsessed with the death of her brother who was killed in an accident. Harriet's obsession is with a ghost, with the dead, with her own self-pity and self-love. The indifferent physician in the asylum has given up hope of her cure, and indirectly indicates that her cure lies outside the hospital. She goes to New York City, without money, without friends. Mr. Brand's parable unfolds: he undertakes to cure her with the reality of the city, with the suffering of a garment with the odors and poverty of a down-fire-trap tenement, and with the love of a telephone operator. Mr. Brand opens up the hidden human suffering. Harriet is compelled to direct herself into the troubles of others, is compelled to deal more with the troubles of the living, and less with her obsession with a ghost. Love, sympathy, the poor, the summer—this is Mr. Brand's unusual parable.

She is cured, Mr. Brand testifies, by the telephone operator's own brother is killed in an accident, and Harriet, seeing her brother's tragedy objectively in the life of her brother, achieves a final introduction to sanity. It is fairly evident that Mr. Brand has undertaken a large theme, a theme which, with its subtleties and without the psychiatric trap-door, has appeared again and again in modern fiction. But, largely because of Mr. Brand's idyllic qualities as a writer, a sense remains that this therapeutic parable violates reality. Harriet is merely the female of the specialists, hardly a human being; John is a psychiatrist's version of the cardboard lover; the minor characters have little more than a superficial social and economic character. The author is much too good, too gentle, and too sweet towards this city and the people of it to justify the values he wishes to raise, without injuring our sense of what is real. Personally I should say curing a madwoman in New York is like sending someone from one asylum to another. It is, however, nice to know that Mr. Brand's extended poetic metaphor which he has written as a novel is running neck and neck at present with blatant

best-sellers. You wouldn't have expected a book with the lyric imagination and the sensitivity of Mr. Brand's to be up with the winners.

ALFRED HAYES.

## Two From Lenin

THE LETTERS OF LENIN, translated and edited by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. Harcourt, Brace & Co. \$4.

AFTER THE SEIZURE OF POWER. (Selected Works of V. I. Lenin. Vol. VII.) International Publishers. Reg. \$2.75. Pop. \$2.

**E**VERYTHING that Lenin wrote is important because it is the work of the greatest figure of modern times. But these letters, now available in English for the first time, occupy a place that is unique not only among his own writings but in the entire literature of the revolutionary movement. They are, first of all, an invaluable record, such as cannot be found elsewhere, of the ideological conflicts and day-to-day organizational problems that confronted the Bolshevik Party during its formative years. They are also, since he left no autobiography, the most intimate and revealing portrait of Lenin himself that we possess.

Because of the nature of many of his letters, Lenin's correspondence is by no means complete. The letters written in chemical ink or between the lines of magazines and newspapers were destroyed as soon as read. Others, for various reasons, never reached their destinations. Of those that did, many have since been lost. Nevertheless, about a thousand letters are extant. The present selection, although it contains only 340 of these letters, succeeds in giving the reader a typical cross-section of Lenin's interests and activities. Beginning with his days as a student of Marx and the German language, the letters cover just over a quarter of a century of revolutionary struggle, which culminated in the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is a measure of the man that his letters are inseparable from the cause he served. Even

the letters to his family and close friends—the most personal that he wrote—reflect this singleness of purpose. Factual, brief, and chiefly devoted to such matters as health, books, money, friends, walks in the country, and the weather—in short, the daily routine of living—they reveal that kindness, warmth of feeling, and deep love of humanity which made Lenin the best-loved man of the Revolution. At the same time, as the political correspondence makes evident, he could be stern, ruthless, and above all personal considerations when occasion warranted. In 1919, for example, he wired the Kursk Supreme Commission as follows: "Immediately arrest Kogan, member of Kursk Central Buying Commission, for failing to help 120 starving Moscow workers, and for allowing them to go away empty-handed. Publish this in newspapers and leaflets, so that all workers . . . may know that suppression will be severe, even shooting, for a formal and bureaucratic attitude toward work, and for not helping starving workers." Yet Lenin realized the inevitability in a mass organization of a certain amount of inefficiency and individual incompetence. He understood that such conditions were not remedied by verbal insults and accusations but by concrete, constructive measures and a willingness to assume, not shirk, responsibility.

To the theoretical and ideological field Lenin brought the same uncompromising, realistic attitude, the same shrewd, practical insight. He constantly exposes the fallacies of the various Marxian revisionists and left-deviationists. Followers of Trotsky and those who defend the "integrity" of the "old Bolsheviks" recently brought to trial will find these letters disturbing reading. "What a swine that Trotsky is! Left phrases and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left! He ought to be exposed . . ." (1917). Nor do the other "old Bolsheviks" come off much better. Throughout we find Bukharin, Pyatakov, Kamenev, Radek, et al., actively opposing Lenin and forming alliances with petty-bourgeois and counter-revolutionary elements. Stalin, on the other hand, is always mentioned favorably. These letters illustrate Lenin's unfailing ability to arrive at a correct analysis of a given situation and to apply it to practical activity. But this single-mindedness did not make for intolerance in human relationships or for narrowness in the cultural field. "I consider," he wrote to Maxim Gorki in 1908, "that an artist can draw much that is useful to him from any philosophy. Finally, I fully and completely agree that in questions of literary creation, all books can be useful and that by extracting the particular point of view both from your artistic experience and from a philosophy, even idealistic philosophy, you may come to conclusions which may be enormously helpful to the Workers' Party."



Scott Johnston

\*THE OUTWARD ROOM, by Millen Brand. Simon Schuster. \$1.25.

Perhaps the two qualities that best distinguish Lenin as a revolutionary and as a man are his extraordinary correlation of thought and action, and his unaffected simplicity. They are also his outstanding qualities as a writer. Only persons blinded by an academic notion of "style" will fail to discern in his works that remarkable conformity of word and thought which is the essence of style, or will disagree with Ezra Pound that "he invented or very nearly invented a new medium, something between speech and action (language as cathode ray) which is worth any writer's study."

These qualities, unfortunately, are seldom evidenced in the translation, which in its awkward, contorted phraseology and syntactical circumlocutions betrays an utter lack of feeling for the English language. But the translators' inadequate command of English is surpassed by their glaring ignorance of Russian. Besides the translators have only the slightest acquaintance with revolutionary history. A letter in which Lenin refers to the Third Duma is dated June-July 1917! The correct date is obviously 1907. This is but one example of the careless editing that characterizes the whole volume. It is a pity that a work of such importance should have been entrusted to persons who are in almost every respect incompetent.

*After the Seizure of Power* brings together the most significant works that Lenin wrote during the years 1917-1918. In addition to such established classics as *State and Revolution* and *The Proletarian Revolution and Renegade Kautsky*, the volume contains a number of speeches and reports as well as an extremely valuable article, "Left-Wing" *Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality*, which has not been available in English until now. The explanatory notes are excellent.

T. C. WILSON.

### At the Crossroads

T. E. LAWRENCE, BY HIS FRIENDS. Edited by A. W. Lawrence. Doubleday, Doran. \$4.00.

LAWRENCE of Arabia, the greatest individual figure to emerge from the World War and the artist who found more art in action than in art, failed to play a mature role in post-war Europe for two reasons. Hating the war itself, and in despair at the joint Franco-British sell-out of the Arab cause, he never translated his resentment into an effective analysis of the responsible imperial and class interests. And similarly his revolt against society, which was deep enough to include a hatred of its property relations, its traditional complacency and its typical art, was rendered tragic and futile through his scorn for politics seen falsely as an end in itself. The man "with no taste for organized life," but with more genius for organization and leadership than any man of his generation, spent the best years of his life as a private in the army. Master of words, creator of a style and architect of history, he was so taken in by genteel standards that he accepted the



William Sanders

verdict of failure when his contributions to third-rate magazines were returned to him. The warrior who felt acute moral guilt for every man he killed, the delegate to Versailles who saw the trading and the injustice, satisfied his passion for mechanical perfection and human comradeship by building engines of destruction.

Every gesture in his tragic life was weighted with this conflict. We see the young archeologist at the polite table of the British consul's wife who complains listlessly that the climate ruins her powers of concentration: "You should contemplate your navel, Mrs. Fontana." We see the unnatural dualism of his outlook in a conversation reported by E. M. Forster: "I said that if there were another big European war, nothing would survive—no civilization, no poetry. T. E. did not mind about civilization, but any menace to poetry scandalized him, and he replied a little primly that poetry is indestructible." Alec Dixon reports that while "strongly opposed to any kind of organized social reform . . . for the underdog as an individual he had the keenest sympathy which he frequently displayed in queer, angry little comments as we passed through a village or the dismal slums of some coast town." Most significant of all is an incident recorded by Ernest Thurtle, Labor M.P.: "After rebuking me on one occasion for taking up an attitude of opposition to the admission of Trotsky to this country, he went on to say that if the people were not contented enough to refuse revolution, then he was a very poor judge of the situation. But he promptly added: 'Don't fly off with the idea that I laud this contentment: I think the planet is in a damnable condition, which no change of party or social reform will do more than palliate insignificantly. What is needed is a new master species—birth control for us, to end the human race in fifty years—

and then a clear field for some cleaner reform.'

But intuitively he sensed that Lenin was the greatest figure of the epoch. And to visualize the ruling class that so greedily subtly took this "eccentric" son to its bow condescendingly at such an aberrant genius. No less intuitively did he firm reject a bid to join the British Union of Socialists. Death, on the eve of his return to life, prolonged forever the great drama in which events might ultimately have force to make. As a military strategist he will be remembered as long as the world is plagued by wars, and as a writer his piercing descriptions of the terrible wars upon the human spirit. But as history may come to regard his life as the most meaningful tragic symbol of the transition from class culture to collectivism.

SELDEN RODMAN

### Soft Focus

FLOOD-LIGHT ON EUROPE, by Felix Wittmer. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.75.

MR. WITTMER has a good word for almost everyone. He defends fascism, communism, military dictatorships, bourgeois democracies, coöperative states, buffer states, everything except British imperialism which he unmercifully belabors. As a result, his attempts to forecast the future of Europe are an aggregate of shaky truisms.

His odyssey begins with the Soviet Union and he promptly states his disbelief in the recent trials. But instead of a long diatribe against communism, Mr. Wittmer proceeds, through a long and, one may add, sound statistical survey, to prove the economic achievements of the Soviets, the complete success of collectivization, the admirable treatment of national

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DEB:LN

minorities, the non-aggressive, non-imperialist foreign policy of the U.S.S.R.

Hitler's Germany comes in for reverse treatment. Mr. Wittmer starts out with some sharp comments on the brutality and racial poppycock of Nazism, and does not fail to observe the hand-in-glove alliance between German big business and the Nazi dictatorship. Then, as though feeling he has been harsh enough with the Nazis, he perorates on Hitler's "increasing popularity" with the German people, and argues that, if the Germans like Hitler, who is he to complain. Recent events in Germany, however, the Catholic disaffection, the protests against German collaboration with Franco, the growing strength of the underground people's front, strikingly deflate this illusion of Hitler's "popularity."

From Germany, Mr. Wittmer travels to Spain, and promptly condemns fascist intervention. He sees the Spanish people fighting against foreign mercenaries hired by the dying feudal aristocracy in a final effort to maintain its hideous rule.

Fascist Italy is another story. Though he dislikes the ferocity of blackshirt methods, and Mussolini's fronting for the banks and the chambers of commerce, he feels that the Duce is expressing the "national will for a place in the sun," and goes so far as to justify the conquest of Ethiopia by arguing that the Italians will develop that country better than Haile Selassie could.

All this unpredictable jumping-around from one side to the other is no logical preface for Mr. Wittmer's blistering attack on the British empire. He studies the exploitation of Ireland and India, Egypt and Hongkong, at point-blank range, and has no language strong enough to express his contempt for the British Tories who enjoy their prosperity at the expense of millions of native slaves, and aid fascism in Spain, Portugal, and Germany to protect their investments.

Mr. Wittmer makes constant use of valuable statistical charts and explanatory trade maps. He occasionally—but only occasionally—sees the class divisions that are determining the fate of the world. His focus shifts and blurs, and his Europe emerges a bedlam of confused antagonisms. Perhaps nothing better illustrates the erratic nature of his political understanding than the fact that, though he casts only a brief glance at the Far East, he unexpectedly arrives at the profound truth that China can best resist Japanese aggression by an alliance with the Soviet Union.

LEO GURKO.

### Mind Therapy

THE MENTALLY ILL IN AMERICA, by Albert Deutsch. Doubleday, Doran. \$3.

ALBERT DEUTSCH has written a masterful survey in his encyclopedic work on the mentally ill in America. He presents us with a wealth of historical facts, gathered with meticulous care, and outlined in a dynamic system against the constantly shifting cultural pattern of the American scene. His basic

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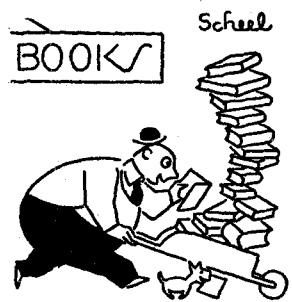
thesis is that mental illness, which has finally been recognized by progressive psychiatrists as a social rather than an individual disease, is the product of society, and hence is the concern of society. And the implication of this thesis, which might well be heeded by all those professionals who attempt to remain in academic seclusion, is admirably put by Frederick H. Allen, who concludes that "... the psychiatrist, oriented in reality, recognizes that when the obstacles increase in the external conditions of living, the number of persons thrust beyond their capacity to adjust becomes greater; hence his interest joins that of the social scientist in bringing about changes in the social and economic life of the group to reduce the hazards of living."

The twenty-one chapters of Deutsch's book are concerned with the provisions for the mentally ill in America, from colonial times to the present. Only very brief reference is made to progress or retrogression in other countries, either before or during this period. The presentation is scholarly, yet is not lacking in interest or dramatic value. The inclusion of the biographies of such leading figures as Benjamin Rush, Dorothea Lynd Dix, and Clifford W. Beers, not only lends color but also gives us insight into the need for a close relationship between individual genius and organizational forces. A careful attempt is made to show the hiatus between progress in the theory of mental illness and the actual practice of this theory. Deutsch demonstrates that we have come a long way from colonial days when psychotics were treated as witches and the agents of Satan to the contemporary period, when, in the words of Dr. William A. White, "Mental disorder as we ordinarily meet it is a disorder of the individual as a social unit." We have not come such a long way from the time when the primary concern of the state or local governing agency, was simply to devise the cheapest means of ridding the community of the difficulty created by these ill persons.

*The Mentally Ill in America* is well worth reading by all serious students of social maladjustment in this country. It is destined to become a leading reference work, and its contribution should endure for many years.

It is unfortunate, however, that the author does not see fit to draw a clearer relation between the socio-political developments of the day and progress in improving institutional care for the psychotics. The book is dotted with many passing references to this relation, but nowhere is a systematic presentation of this important point made. The value of the work, precisely because it is a historical narrative, would have been greatly enhanced by such a treatment. Nor is it possible, in this reviewer's opinion, to present an adequate picture without constant reference to the simultaneous progress or decline of the care for the mentally ill in other countries, and the parallel development of socio-political practice in these countries.

Attention must also be called to the fact that Deutsch is concerned with only a small portion of the mentally ill in America—those



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under institutional care. The vastly greater problem, of proper psychiatric-psychologic care during personality integration and before possible mental breakdown, care which is still almost completely unavailable to the masses, is left untouched, although the author indicates that he is fully aware of it. Here is a problem that well deserves an equally worthy companion volume!

MAX L. HUTT.

## Brief Review

AMERICAN DREAM, by Michael Foster. William Morrow & Co. \$3.00.

This hodge-podge of yarns, local color, pioneer history, stalwart men, and grim, moody women may be epical and inspirational in intent, but it adds up to almost nothing. The incidents, sometimes entertaining in themselves, are chaotically thrown together; and too often we are expected to accept the characters (hazy, passive, isolated images that the majority of them are) at the author's valuation, which frequently does not tally with their speech and behavior. Once in a while Foster's very conscious attempts at style result in something like small poetry. But for the most part it is uneasy straining with similes and dreamy words. The more convincing parts are the only distinctively American ones: life on a Kansas prairie and the adolescence of the hero, Shelby Thrall.

What is the American dream? The answer, which should mean everything, is windy and dry. Shelby doesn't know what he means by it, but he thinks that the whole trouble is that we have been sold out by ranting demagogues and pig-eyed politicians. That's the beginning and end of it. He finally breaks through with this sagacious reflection on the "stupid, rabid manias of latter-day patriots": "I've noticed that most of them are descendants of riff-raff immigrants that come flocking over from Europe once America has been made safe for them."

In the end, Shelby sails off to a small coast town, there to guard and revivify his precious heritage. But with his lack of understanding of the real causes of society's corruption, there is nothing to hope for in his one-man custodianship of that nebulous thing the author calls the "American dream."

D. W.

★

## Recently Recommended Books

- The Paris Commune of 1871*, by Frank Jellinek. Oxford University Press. \$3.  
*Child Workers in America*, by Katharine DuPre Lumpkin and Dorothy Wolff Douglas. Robert M. McBride. \$3.50.  
*The Negro Labor Unionist of New York*, by Charles Lionel Franklin. Columbia University Press. \$3.75.  
*The Second Five Year Plan*, The State Planning Commission. International. \$1.75.  
*Japan's Feet of Clay*, by Freda Uteley. Norton. \$3.75.  
*Key Economic Areas in Chinese History*, by Ch'ao-Ting Chi. Peter Smith. \$3.  
*The Road: In Search of America*, by Nathan Asch. Norton. \$2.75.  
*Dear Theo, The Autobiography of Vincent Van Gogh*, edited by Irving Stone. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.75.  
*Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts*, by Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.  
*The Soviets*, by Albert Rhys Williams. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.  
*The Court Disposes*, by Mordecai Feinstein. Covici, Friede. \$1.

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# SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

*A new batch of Hollywood films—The London play season—Gropius and W.P.A. art*

**T**HE extremely low ebb of current productions gives me the opportunity to discuss two outstanding films that I was unable to review during the recent motion picture strike. The first is *Captains Courageous* (M.G.M.) from the Kipling novel of the same name. The story has been "modernized," and the character of the hero trimmed to fit Freddie Bartholomew (Kipling's Harvey was a much older young man). There have been other changes, but essentially it is the story of an anti-social, rich young brat whose personality and social attitudes are transformed by his contact with the real, hard-working, Gloucester fisherfolk. This theme, reenforced by quasi-documentary sequences of the life and work of the fishermen, provides a frame for a series of seascapes and a thrilling race between the schooners "We're Here" and "Jenny Cushman."

The producers proudly claim this to be "one of the greatest pictures of our time." This is, of course, a slight exaggeration, and you will believe it only if you believe that the Kipling story is one of the greatest novels of our time. The production is very expensive and, in spite of that, in very good taste; the exteriors are handsomely photographed; the sound is skillfully recorded; the race is really exciting; and Spencer Tracy gives a warm and sympathetic interpretation of Manuel. Keeping Metro's *Good Earth* in mind, the most that can be said for *Captains Courageous* is that it is very good hokum; it bears the stamp of the most efficient and progressive (technically speaking) factory in Hollywood. A careful analysis of the film's construction will prove that what gives it distinctive quality and dignity is the writing. Marc Connelly, John Lee Machin and Dale Van Every have turned out a script that makes listening very pleasurable.

It is almost impossible, in most films, to choose any one element that contributes most to the film's success or failure. Most of them are essentially what the producer wants them to be. Occasionally there comes a film that lends itself to analysis. Thus, in addition to *Captains Courageous*, there is Paramount's *Make Way for Tomorrow*. Unlike the other, this film owes its exceptional quality to Leo McCarey's fine direction.

The tale of an old couple, suddenly confronted with poverty and compelled to depend upon their children for economic support, for a roof over their heads, is a universal one in our society. The fact that there is no solution offered makes it intensely tragic; the very universality of the theme, however, has provided a tradition of horrible sentimentality that goes back to the very beginnings of the American motion picture industry. The story and the script, which was written by Vina Delmar who specializes in this genre, furnished the base for another *Over the Hill to the Poor*

*House* or a *Stella Dallas*. But Mr. McCarey saved the day.

His casting is fine. In Hollywood language Victor Moore, Beulah Bondi, Fay Bainter, Thomas Mitchell, and Maurice Moscovitch aren't "big money" stars. But they are actors. McCarey's direction and camera-work have turned *Make Way for Tomorrow* into an important American film. The first half of the picture is direct, simple, imaginative, and hits the audience right between the eyes. Director McCarey succeeds in stirring the emotions without himself becoming emotional or synthetic. It is only in the latter portion of the film that the director has given way to Hollywood traditions. Allow me to say, however, that he does this gracefully. The problems of the children which are interlocked with those of the aged parents are treated superficially. A completer treatment and a more realistic end would have given the film more guts. The director has stated that he had "invested his story with too much reality." "The public isn't ready for an excess of honesty just yet." With all my respect for the man who made a fine motion picture out of Harold Lloyd's *The Milky Way* and who will be remembered for *Duck Soup* (the Marx Bros.) and *Ruggles of Red Gap*, this is the most revealing description of the Hollywood mind that has ever been made.

*A Day at the Races* (M.G.M.): It matters little whether or not this film is any better or worse than the previous Marx brothers epics. As far as that goes, Hollywood hasn't yet provided a film that would make the most of their talents. Nevertheless, this movie gives Groucho, as a horse-doctor, a chance to practice medicine in a typical American sanitarium. Harpo is a jockey, and Chico is everything. All three take a crack at being doctors in one of the funniest acts of their movie career, which also is a satire on all medical movies, including *Men in White*. The audience loves it, and, as usual, the laughter makes it impossible to get all the gags at one sitting.



Frank Davidson

*Slim* (Warner Bros.): A glorification of electrical linesman—which isn't a bad idea. In spite of the fact that William Wister Hays wrote the novel as well as the screen play, the film fails to come off. The men are self-sacrificing heroes, but they aren't human. They are like the men that are eulogized in the expensive ads of General Electric. The construction sequences are lively, dramatic, and informative; but they have no relation to the plot which is a conventional triangle. After the first two bits of homespun philosophy by Stuart Erwin, you will suspect he is imitating Bob Burns who in turn seems to be imitating Will Rogers.

*Ever Since Eve* (Warners Bros.): It is a little pathetic the way Marion Davies surrounds herself with good-looking young men and well-known comedians in the effort to turn out entertainment. For years this has been going on while Marion gets older and older, and the films get worse. PETER ELLIS.

## THE LONDON THEATER

**A**NYONE who feels depressed about the state of the American theater had better come to London to see what decrepitude is really like. We Americans grumble, and quite rightly, at the trivial commonplace which is the staple fare both on Broadway and on the road. But in London there are not even those plays which, thanks to an occasional intelligent commercial producer and such organizations as the Group Theatre, the Theatre Union and the federal theater, do every so often confer on the American audience the privilege of using their minds.

With the exception of the Auden poetic dramas, there has not been in London a play of any degree of social awareness or controversial interest since *Love on the Dole*, which literally electrified England three years ago. At present another bolt has just struck—Elmer Rice's *Judgment Day*. No one quite understands how it ever got past the Lord Chamberlain, who must license all plays before they are presented to the public, and who has steadily vetoed anything resembling criticism of the Nazi regime. But Rice's melodrama based on the Reichstag trial did get by, and is creating something of a furor. *The Children's Hour* and *Tobacco Road* (now running) were both banned, and could be presented only at the enterprising Norman Marshall's Gate Theatre where members viewed them by subterfuge, since a performance "for members only" is a private affair not subject to the Lord Chamberlain's jurisdiction. There is, however, a pleasant feeling that it hasn't been such a bad year, and that the censor has been perceptibly tamed, since, after prolonged agitation, he was prevailed upon to license *Parnell* and *Victoria Regina*!

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roarious affair lampooning everything respect-  
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lished church and the white man's burden, and  
doing it very well indeed.

The Unity Theatre Club originated as an  
amateur workers' dramatic group, and found a  
home in its present quarters two seasons ago.  
From a struggling organization presenting an  
occasional bill of briefly rehearsed skits and  
sketches, it has grown to a group of over eighty  
actors with a full-time paid business and tech-  
nical staff. At present one company is pre-  
sented *Cannibal Carnival* nightly for a period  
of three weeks, while two other companies do  
mobile work among the trade unions and local  
political organizations. During the recent bus  
strike, one of the mobile troupes played fifteen  
performances of *Waiting for Lefty* to the  
strikers. In addition to *Lefty*, the Club's  
repertory includes *Private Hicks*, *Stand Up  
for Spain* (a mass chant that has evoked tre-  
mendous response), an operetta, and a num-  
ber of other plays. The actors work all day in  
offices, stores and workshops, and rehearse and  
play at night. Many of them have not had a  
free evening in months.

The author of *Cannibal Carnival*, Herbert  
Hodge, is a taxi-driver who hacks all day and  
works more than half the night. He has also  
worked at sea, in a coal mine, and in the  
American West as a harvester. He went to  
school only till he was fourteen. He has writ-  
ten two other plays, one in the repertory of  
the club, called *Where's That Bomb?*, and  
another, unproduced as yet, about a bus strike,  
written long before the big London strike, but  
astonishingly prophetic of some of the develop-  
ments which signaled the recent walk-out.

It is difficult to do justice to the freshness,  
the combination of subtlety and broad farce,  
and the aptness and pithiness of the humor in  
*Cannibal Carnival*. Bear in mind the staid  
and sober atmosphere of the London stage  
where politics and religion are concerned. No  
fun has been made of anything of that kind  
since Gilbert and Sullivan laid down their  
pens. An *Of Thee I Sing* in London, a mu-  
sical revue containing a single sketch such as  
those in *Parade* or *As Thousands Cheer*,  
would dry up the Thames. Hence some of  
the charm, but not all, of *Cannibal Carnival*.

In Hodge's extravaganza, Crabbe, a captain  
of industry, Bartholomew Bumpus, bishop of  
Belgravia, and Joe, a policeman, are stranded  
on a cannibal island. Crabbe sees a great op-  
portunity to "civilize" the natives:

"No trade unions! No vexatious labor laws! No  
Bolsheviks! Just simple innocent savages! Why,  
it's the chance of a lifetime! We'll civilize 'em,  
Bish! We'll put 'em to work!"

The three of them proceed to initiate Eg-  
bert, a native, into some of the white man's  
customs. They are hungry, and Egbert has a  
fine loaf of bread.

Bumpus: First hold out your loaf at arm's length, so.



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Egbert (*grasping it with one hand at either end*): Like this?  
Bumpus: Splendid.  
Crabbe: Well done! Well done! (*Egbert beams with pleasure.*)  
Bumpus: Then we say . . .  
Bumpus and Crabbe (*together*): Oh Lord, we thank Thee for what we are about to receive.  
Egbert: "For what we are about to receive"—how beautiful!  
Crabbe: Wait! Wait! That's nothing to what's coming!  
Bumpus: Yes—that's only the beginning. We call it "grace." It's Mr. Crabbe's turn now.  
Crabbe (*solemnly*): Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. (*He takes half the loaf.*)  
Egbert: What is that?  
Crabbe (*taking a bite*): Patriotism, my boy.  
Egbert: And then?  
Bumpus: And then comes the most beautiful part of all.  
Crabbe: Watch this, it's good.  
Bumpus: And unto God the things that are God's. (*Takes the other half of the loaf.*) That's religion.  
Egbert: And what do you say then?  
Crabbe, Bumpus, and Joe (*in unison*): God helps those who help themselves—hurrah for the British empire! (*They all eat.*)  
Egbert (*pondering*): I see. God helps those who help themselves. Yes, I see. (*Running after them*) And now will you please give me my loaf? I must take it home. I am already late.  
Bumpus: Come, come, my son. You have no loaf. It's been transubstantiated.  
Crabbe: That's the point. That's the beauty of it. Don't you see?  
Egbert: But I have nothing!  
Joe (*seizing him*): Then you're arrested for being without visible means of subsistence.  
Egbert: What is that?  
Joe: Another white man's custom.

Whereupon Egbert, encountering Ambrose, a fellow-native, tries out his recently acquired knowledge, and runs off with Ambrose's bread, shouting "God-helps-those-who-help-themselves-hurrah-for-the-British-empire!" Ambrose pursues him yelling "thief!" and Joe arrests Egbert again. Egbert explains that he was only practicing the white man's custom.

Bumpus: But, my dear boy, you're not a white man!  
Egbert: No. But I'd like to be like the white man. Religious. Patriotic.  
Bumpus: The heathen in his blindness! Eyes, they have, and they see not. Ears, and they hear not. (*To Crabbe*) What shall we do with him? He means well, I think. But like all savages, he's simple and childlike. Utterly lacking in moral sense.  
Crabbe: I'm not so sure. He's very quick on the uptake. He might be useful.  
Bumpus: I doubt it, Mr. Crabbe. He doesn't even know the difference between religion and robbery.  
Egbert: But I do, white man.  
Crabbe: What is it, then?  
Egbert: When you take bread, it is patriotism and religion. When I take bread, it is robbery and violence.  
Crabbe (*clapping*): Bravo! You couldn't have put it better if you'd been to Oxford.

The natives are thereupon given the privilege of redeeming themselves from idleness and sin by working for Crabbe. In due succession private property, wages, price-cutting, and unemployment make their appearance. Disaffection ensuing, the harassed Bumpus and Crabbe have recourse to an election which, intended to be bogus, results in an overwhelm-

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ing majority for Egbert, become the native leader. The vested interests hurriedly take to Jew-baiting and Red-scaring and pop Egbert into prison. He is tried for treason in a magnificent scene in which the forces of law and order (Joe the policeman) serve alternately as witness and judge, and the vested interests (Crabbe and Bumpus) as a very bored jury. In the end a popular uprising saves Egbert, and Bumpus and Crabbe are disposed of in the usual cannabalistic manner, with policeman Joe ("completely disaffected and class conscious") stirring the stew for the feast with his policeman's night-stick.

ELEANOR FLEXNER.

## THE FINE ARTS

RECENTLY Harvard University invited a distinguished German exile to join its teaching staff. The coming of Walter Gropius, one of the outstanding pioneers in modern architecture and the founder of the experimental school, the Bauhaus, should mark a new development in American art. He has done more than any other single individual to build a bridge between the handicraft arts of pre-industrial civilization and the new machine arts of mass production, which in the future will place art within reach of millions of people. Under Hitler, his reward was the closing of the Bauhaus at Dessau, where the most advanced artists, designers and architects taught students from all over the world.

One of the really constructive works accomplished under the Federal Art Project of the W.P.A. was the creation of the Design Laboratory in New York, a free school of applied design open to students unable to afford private art schools. Sponsored by such noted architects as William Lescage, Frederick Kiesler, Percival Goodman, and Ely Jacques Kahn, the program of the school was dedicated to carrying on the work of the Bauhaus. Previously such courses were given only at the Carnegie Institute where the high tuition fee made them unavailable to many.

The response to the Design Laboratory, organized with a staff of competent teachers and artists was immediate. Almost three hundred students enrolled and over four hundred were placed on the waiting list.

Now the students, after a year and a half training in the shop and in the classroom are holding their first comprehensive exhibition at the school, 10 East 39th St.

The result vindicates the pedagogical principles of the Bauhaus. Each student, allotted a wall space of five square feet, displays his best work, representing both theoretical and practical training. Here one may see the design for a chair through its various stages to completion; models for the decoration of an apartment, for a cosmetic display, for window decoration; architectural drawings, or posters and photographs advertising various products. Here is excellent work by the sculpture class and, in the next room, a design for a thermostatic iron, whose por-

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Nevertheless, the drastic slashing of the cultural projects has struck the Design Laboratory. As we go to press, the good news arrives that the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, & Technicians, C.I.O. affiliate, will carry on the Design Laboratory as one of its own schools, with the faculty and student body intact.

CHARMION VON WIEGAND.



### Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Daylight, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

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**American Youth Congress.** William Hinckley, president of the Congress and others. Sat., July 3, 2:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

**"Mr. Sycamore."** Robert Ayre's play dramatized by the Columbia Workshop. Sun., July 4, 7 p.m., C.B.S.

**Ralph Bates.** From Spain every Tuesday and Friday at 7:30 p.m. via short wave on station EAR, 31.65 meters. On all other nights, a fifteen-minute news broadcast at 7:30 p.m.

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**Make Way for Tomorrow.** A tender tale of an elderly couple dependent on their children.

**Paris Commune.** An ambitious Soviet version of the historical character of the Commune.

#### PLAYS

**Hymn to the Rising Sun and Unto Such Glory** (Adelphi, N.Y.). Broad satire of religious quackery in the South and a bitter, tense one-act placed in a chain-gang camp on the same bill.

**Room Service** (Cort, N.Y.). Very funny nonsense about a penniless Broadway showman, ably directed by George Abbott.

**Babes in Arms** (Schubert, N.Y.). Pleasant and talented cast of youngsters in an amusing tuneful Rodgers and Hart musical.

**Excursion** (Vanderbilt, N.Y.). Thunder on the left in comic vein by Victor Wolfson.

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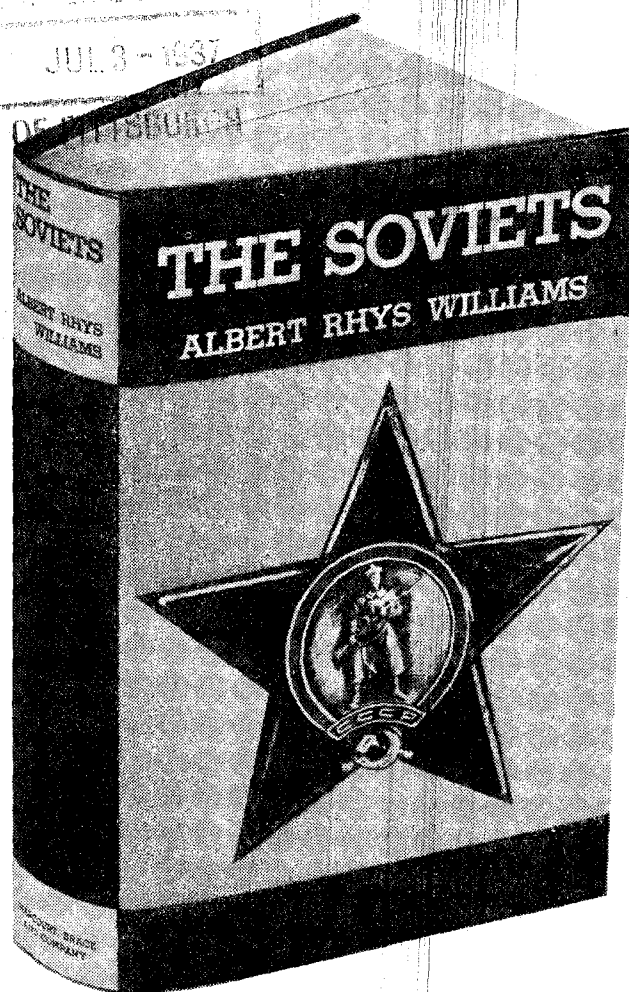
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